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**“TO WEIGH THE WORLD ANEW”: POETICS, RHETORIC, AND SOCIAL
STRUGGLE, FROM SIDNEY’S *ARCADIA* TO SHAKESPEARE’S THEATER**

A Dissertation Presented

by

DAVID A. KATZ

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2018

Department of English

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DAVID A. KATZ

Approved as to style and content by:

Arthur F. Kinney, Chair

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DEDICATION

To Judith Katz, who started me on this journey.

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ABSTRACT

“TO WEIGH THE WORLD ANEW”: POETICS, RHETORIC, AND SOCIAL STRUGGLE FROM SIDNEY’S *ARCADIA* TO SHAKESPEARE’S THEATER

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To Weigh the World Anew examines moments of rhetorical exchange in romances written by Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, and Mary Wroth, arguing that these texts portray formal oratory as either unethical or inefficacious, while simultaneously depicting poetic or theatrical discourses as productively intervening between interlocutors of diverse social statuses. These exemplary episodes show fiction successfully mediating between different classes and genders, creating a demarcation between poetry and competing forms of eloquence and participating in the emergence of the poetical from the rhetorical. Ultimately, the repeated depiction of *poesis* as an efficacious form of mediation in self-reflexive romance shows that modern conceptions of poetics partially emerge as a response to a set of rapidly changing social formations.

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INTRODUCTION

ACCOMMODATING ELOQUENCE AND SOCIAL STRIFE—THE EARLY MODERN FANTASY OF POETIC EFFICACY

*Should fantasy be driven out, judgement too, the real act of knowledge, is
exorcised.*

—Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*

I began this project with a question: why did early modern romances, in narrative after narrative, introduce representations of persuasion in close proximity to scenes of violence? These representations, reoccurring in texts authored by Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, Mary Wroth, and many others besides, portray oratorical exchanges sliding into brutality, often blurring the distinction between speech and physical harm. More troublingly still, these episodes almost uniformly feature communication and conflict between speakers of asymmetrical social statuses; they depict elite figures first speaking to and then attacking poor men and women. Even more strangely, these moments seem to call attention to elaborate poetic conceits and devices, foregrounding not only communication and discourse generally, but the specific status of poetics and exemplarity. What initially began as a single question soon spiraled into several lines of inquiry. Why did these violent tableaux cluster in a particular genre, romance? What was the relationship between these depictions of social strife and historically existing conflicts? Over time, I even began to wonder what these intensely self-reflexive portrayals of oratory indicated about rhetorical poetics. What did these depictions contribute to the development of modern literature?

*“To Weigh the World Anew:” Poetics, Rhetoric, and Social Struggle, from
Sidney’s “Arcadia” to Shakespeare’s Theater* locates answers to these questions within a

tradition of hermeneutical accommodation central to Renaissance poetics. Throughout four chapters focusing on works composed by Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Wroth, I explore portrayals of oratory within Renaissance romance, showing that works in this still understudied genre depict formal persuasion either as failing or as a form of domination closely associated with violence, a depiction which contributed to the advent of modern poetics and—ultimately—of fiction. All of the texts studied in this dissertation focus either on the capacity of a speaker to adjust arguments to audiences, an adaption known in rhetorical theory as *decorum*, or on the ability of audiences to contextualize an argument ethically and correctly, a practice known in rhetorical theory as *accommodation*. In a still well-known formulation, Horace's *Ars Poetica* memorably describes decorum as crafting voices appropriate for a character's station, but ideas of propriety also had ethical and interpretive dimensions.¹ As Kathy Eden has shown, rhetors and humanists analogized accommodation, a concept which acquired currency in the analysis of forensic oratory before being adopted by theology, biblical hermeneutics, and then finally by poetics, as a form of homecoming.² To interpret a text accommodatingly means to render the unfamiliar familiar, to bring a piece of language into the home, or even to make an alien speaker or audience recognizable. As interpretive practice, an accommodating reading attempts to fairly and charitably contextualize discourse. This dissertation reveals that—faced with the political, religious, and economic upheaval of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries—English authors responded to an increasingly diverse social landscape by portraying *poesis*, poetic making, as enabling this homecoming, frequently at the expense of oratory. Facing a

newly fractured and increasingly expanding world, early modern romances both intimate how audiences should respond to fiction and model a social role for literary texts.

This project participates in a recent turn within Renaissance studies toward reconsidering the relationship between rhetoric and poetry. A just published monograph by Colleen Ruth Rosenfeld, for example, directs attention toward Sidney's, Spenser's, and Wroth's use of stylistic elements which call attention to the artifice of poetic making: to conceits, figures, and devices which purposefully violate the principle of decorum in order to celebrate and advocate for an expanded conception of poetics.³ Rosenfeld shows that modern literature, in part, emerges by strategically challenging elements of the rhetorical tradition. This dissertation provides the other side of this development, locating this change within historical circumstances, a move which shows that the demarcation of poetics from within rhetoric developed in reaction to a series of economic, social, and religious transformations. Rosenfeld's discussion, while not ahistorical, focuses on the formal content of literary texts; my intervention recalls the fact that both literary form and the interpretive categories which mediate this property possess their own historicity. As this introduction will demonstrate, attending to this historicity provides answers to many of questions I listed earlier.

Throughout this introduction, I use either "accommodation" or "rhetorical hermeneutics" as umbrella terms to signify different concepts imported into English poetics from forensic oratory and the *interpretatio scripti* tradition. All of these concepts relate to audience participation, to attempts by readers and auditors to make a text's meaning intelligible or have practical utility. My chapters are more specific when their subjects can plausibly be related to specific theories of interpretation: my first chapter, for

example, locates the suppression of a peasants' revolt in Sidney's *Arcadia* within the author's well-documented engagement with *scopus* theory and within the *paragone* debates; my second chapter examines Spenser's representation of Justice in Book Five of *The Faerie Queene* in light of biblical hermeneutics and within Renaissance theories of exemplarity; my third chapter focuses on Shakespeare's representation of the performance of ethics in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*; and my final chapter relates a depiction of beneficial persuasion in Wroth's *Urania* to controversies over the status of formal eloquence against efficacious ordinary speech. Clearly, I am consolidating a broad array of interpretive approaches under a single banner, but accommodation's association with readerly *nostos* makes it a particularly appropriate term for an argument about romance, a genre which frequently depicts voyages and journeys homeward. Romance, moreover, often links success to the capacity for social adaption. The *Arcadia*, The *Faerie Queene*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and the *Urania* all link a character's triumph or failure to their capacity to respond appropriately to circumstances and audiences. My use of accommodation suggests parallels between readers and the protagonists of romance narratives. Beyond the appropriateness of the term for a discussion of romance, "accommodation" possesses a social resonance; it connects representations of conflict to historically existing social ruptures, and it directs attention toward attempts to address these fractures within the texts this dissertation studies.

Aside from summarizing my four chapters, the bulk of this introduction will provide a condensed and, by necessity, incomplete overview of Renaissance rhetoric, encapsulating a still widely accepted account of how poetics and eloquence intertwined while also demonstrating how a focus on accommodation complicates our picture of

vernacular literature in the period. This introduction signals some of my dissertation's central interventions, predominantly my suggestion that attenuating to the emerging separation between rhetoric and poetics in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries can help explain why so many works of fiction from the period strike today's readers—scholars, critics, literary historians, and students alike—as both profoundly troubling and yet also deeply provocative. Authors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I argue, adapted a set of closely related ideas about accommodation and exemplarity, concepts which originated in antiquity but were radically reformed throughout the Renaissance to both address the concerns of an emerging modernity and to appeal to a growing marketplace for secular, vernacular literature. For several reasons, both elite humanists and common readers valued morally complicated and intellectually challenging literary texts.

I: Problematic Romance

Renaissance intellectuals, in particular, viewed ambiguous moments from romance within the tradition of *problemata*, a reading practice which originated in a commentary on Homer by a certain Heraclitus who flourished circa the first century AD.⁴ Heraclitus' *Homeric Problems* interpreted challenging moments from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, particularly those incidents which were subjected to attacks from decriers of poetry like Plato, as allegorical. This early commentator construed episodes such as the Theomachy and the dalliance between Aphrodite and Ares as moral or philosophical statements which required readers to look beyond the literal sense of the Homeric text to discover pious and edifying meanings. Humanists, in their turn, saw Homer's *Odyssey* as the

ancestor of romance, and they labored to identify moments requiring audience participation in Hellenistic texts by authors like Xenophon of Ephesus, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus, and others. They even used this framework to interpret modern epic romances by authors like Matteo Maria Boiardo, Ludovico Ariosto, and Torquato Tasso. For humanists, these attempts to make the design of a text cohere had clear affinities to accommodation: important intellectuals like Erasmus overtly connected the tradition of Homeric *problemata* to the broader theory of interpretive adaption.⁵ Other authors, particularly those invested in Protestant hermeneutics, followed a theory of reading inaugurated by Matthias Flacius Illyricus and Philip Melanchthon, categorizing these efforts as part of a reader's duty to discover the aim of a book (*scopus libri*).⁶

These practices shaped the reception of romance. Figures as unlike as Simone Fornari and Sir John Harrington defended the genre using arguments descended from both Heraclitus and biblical hermeneutics throughout the sixteenth century. Harrington, for instance, claimed that Ariosto, like Homer, "did of purpose conceale these deepe mysteries of learning...to feed divers taste."⁷ The discovery of these "mysteries" required "high conceited" readers interested in piecing together discontinuities in order to look through Ariosto's surface content toward his authorial design. Barbara Reynolds, in her introduction to *Orlando furioso*, argues that humanist defenders of romance inscribed serious moral sentiments into the poem which were unintended by its author, but whatever Ariosto's original authorial intent, these heady interpretations undoubtedly contributed to the decision made by Sidney, Spenser, and others, to explore the possibilities offered by the genre.⁸ Spenser, locating himself within this tradition, explicitly imitates Ariosto on numerous occasions. Going far beyond Heraclitus' original

understanding of *problemata* as occulted allegories, early modern commentators viewed *romanzo* as a genre which featured *problematic* moments which required audience discernment in order to seek out the *summa* or *intentio* of an author.⁹ The fact that romances could be problematic was part of the genre's appeal. The potential to exercise forensic judgement sold printed romances in bookshops. The same attraction conceivably drew men and women to the Globe theater.

This description of *problemata*, then, partly explains why these ambiguous and disturbing portrayals of violence took place in Renaissance romance: challenging moments appealing to an audience's judgment functioned as a generic convention. This introduction's third section provides an additional explanation for why romance conveyed a fantasy of poetics and fiction addressing diverse audiences, an explanation rooted in the genre's cultural status as a popular narrative form which also had an elite audience and an antique pedigree. The next two sections of this introduction, however, turn toward rhetorical theory, examining how self-reflexive portrayals of oratory and violence reflected changes within conceptions of rhetorical poetics, and how these changes in turn developed in reaction to shifting economic, religious, and political conditions throughout the early modern period. Because all four of my chapters focus on portrayals of oratory, the following section describes the canons, parts, and proofs of an oration; this description both establishes the norms romances interrogated and specifies how classical models were reconceived to fit the rapidly evolving print culture of early modern Europe.

II: Poetry and Rhetoric

For their part, Renaissance rhetoricians recognized three branches of rhetoric, a division which had existed at least since Aristotle wrote his great manual on the subject. The first branch, deliberative, originally had a legislative purpose within the Athenian assembly and later the Roman Senate. Even in the Renaissance, this branch still maintained its link to participation in politics and courtly disputes. Yet while deliberative oratory always focused on exhorting or dissuading a person or group of people, it was never exclusively linked to overt political argument. The second branch, forensic, originally encompassed any discussion of past action and was specifically linked to judicial or legal argument. This branch included all persuasion that defended or accused a person, activity, subject, vocation, belief, or group, and it encompassed any form of argument which attempted to make sense of the past. The use of this mode of persuasion was very widespread within poetry and drama throughout the period. As Don Paul Abbot observes, “civic and forensic origins are almost always present in Renaissance literature. That is, literature, like rhetoric itself, is always argumentative and persuasive, never neutral.”¹⁰ Epideictic, the third and least commented-upon type of oratory, stands as its most enigmatic branch—enigmatic because this category is nearly unrelated to the “forensic origins” referred to by Abbot. Even the well-informed Richard Lanham admits that it “has always posed a classificatory problem.”¹¹ This confusion dates back to Aristotle, who notes that “In epideictic, there is either praise or blame,” but he then fails to address the subject with the same thoroughness with which he treats deliberative and judicial oratory.¹² Yet poetry and epideictic rhetoric possess clear affinities, and theorists have even classified poetry as a subdivision of this branch of eloquence. In recent decades, Jeffery Walker has made the provocative suggestion that epideictic-poetic rhetoric, although often viewed today as the

black sheep among the three branches of eloquence, was actually central to the rhetorical tradition throughout antiquity and into the early modern period. If we miss this, according to Walker, it is because our focus on Aristotle has caused us to comparatively neglect the influential traditions embodied first by the sophists, then later by Isocrates, and even later by Cicero and Quintilian. For Walker, Isocratic epideictic does more than praise or blame: it “shapes and cultivates the basic codes of value and belief by which a society or a culture lives; it shapes the ideologies and imageries with which, and by which, the individual members of the community identify themselves.”¹³

The structure of an oration was as well-defined as the genres of rhetoric. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, probably the most influential rhetorical manual throughout the Medieval period and Renaissance, asserts that an oration has six parts.¹⁴ An *exordium* opens a speech in which the writer uses relevant generalities, anecdotes, quotations, or analogies to capture an audience’s attention, ultimately leading them into the specific topic and to the speaker’s argument. After finishing this introduction, the speaker succinctly states the main claim or claims of his or her argument, what the *Herennium* refers to as the *narratio*. The speaker then proceeds to a *diviso*, a moment which outlines the main points, reviews the debate to clarify what needs to be discussed further, or explains where the speaker and his or her opponent disagree. The next step, the *confirmatio*, sets out the arguments, usually three, which support the orator’s claims, including any natural or artificial proofs offered by the speaker. As this description suggests, this subdivision essentially functions as the oration’s body. A careful orator next attempts to refute any objections to his or her argument, an aspect pseudo-Cicero refers to as the *refutatio*, before concluding by summarizing his or her argument,

describing the urgency of his or her viewpoint, and sometimes even the actions that should be taken by the audience. Commentators explicitly mapped out every kind of discourse, including fiction and poetry, using the structures recommended in manuals like the *Rhetorica*. This categorization, however, did not preclude sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors from achieving complex or ambiguous affects. This pattern matters for this project insofar as every text I study portrays orators using this structure.

Similar to the uniformity of the structure of an oration, until the emergence of Ramist pedagogy in the late sixteenth century, practically all rhetoricians agreed that rhetoric had five essential canons or parts: invention; arrangement; style; memory; and delivery. Among the most important concepts for poetics, the canon of *inventio* consisted of the discovery and elaboration of arguments or proofs. Aristotle recognized two kinds: non-artistic and artistic: the former consisting of phenomena such as physical evidence and eyewitness testimony and the latter consisting of arguments created by the orator. Aristotle sub-classified artistic proofs into three main types based upon their means of persuasion: ethos—the establishment of the character, expertise, or credibility of a speaker; pathos—moving an audience by generating an emotional response; and logos—proving a case through rational argument, or at least the appearance of rational argument. Aristotle, oddly, considered non-artistic proofs outside the purview of rhetorical theory.¹⁵ Other prominent rhetoricians, especially those with more pragmatic investments in oratorical efficacy such as Cicero, disagreed with this partition.¹⁶ The next canon, arrangement or *dispositio*, referred to the careful structuring of an oration's six parts: my earlier description of the different parts of an oration serves as a condensed and obviously somewhat truncated account of this aspect of rhetorical theory. More significant for the

study of poetics, the canon of style or *elocutio* consisted of the proper use of figures and tropes in order to appropriately and effectively ornament discourse. Discussions of *elocutio* focus on definitions of devices, but also on how to craft a style appropriate for both occasion and audience. These discussions often bog down in the minutiae of classification and over-specificity, on vocabulary and the often-permeable boundary between figure and trope, but the theorization of style, at its best, was also impressively sophisticated, anthropologically thick, and highly conscious of the inseparability of discourse and culture.¹⁷

Memorization and pronunciation, the final the canons of classical rhetoric, held important places in primarily oral or only partially literate societies. But in contrast with their focus on the other canons of rhetoric, humanists comparatively neglected pronunciation. Counterintuitively, even in the increasingly literate early modern period, authors and rhetoricians continued to hold the memory arts in great esteem.¹⁸ This discipline, which according to an account by Plutarch descended from Simonides of Keos, formed an elaborate and highly effective process of using mnemonic *loci* to combine information with mental copies of existing, often familiar, architectural bodies and with powerful, often shockingly taboo mental images to quickly facilitate the memorization and retrieval of arguments and other forms of data.¹⁹ This system persisted until the eighteenth century, but despite the esteem in which many intellectuals held the memory arts, the advent of print and the spread of literacy nevertheless altered the significance of this canon throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the words of Helmut Schanze, “with the invention of printing, public speaking and its written fixation (exemplary, poetical, and practical) undergo an increasing transformation from

pure and oral delivery...and become basically private manuscripts to this new mass medium. Rhetoric thus becomes in a completely new sense literary rhetoric.”²⁰ Stated differently, printed rhetoric deemphasized pronunciation and memorization in favor of a renewed emphasis on *elocutio*. Yet despite the diminishment of these canons, all of the texts studied in this project portray the performance of oratory, including its verbal expression, in great detail. In the case of non-dramatic romances, these elements tend to be portrayed negatively, often as points of contrast with the conceits and devices I argue emblemize a participatory mode of poetics. Taken altogether, the eclipse of pronunciation and memorization by “literary” style correlates with the arrival of modern poetics. As *elocutio* became much more expansive, style became conceptual; as a category, it began to encompass not just *virtutes elocutionis* but also manners, situational ethics, and psychology.²¹

The followers of Petrus Ramus—the Huguenot reformer who advocated moving invention, memorization, and arrangement from the province of rhetoric to logic, leaving rhetoricians with a reduced conception of eloquence interested only in style and pronunciation—took this emphasis on *elocutio* to its logical extreme.²² Earlier humanists such as Erasmus and Melanchthon followed Cicero in positing knowledge as mediated through language: inherently discursive, humanists viewed the reception of truth as contingent and socially constructed, even if truth itself was transcendent and universal. Ramism reversed this trajectory; rhetorical thinking became subordinate to logic which became the only reliable source of knowledge. A handful of influential scholars in the mid-twentieth century attempted to link Ramism with several developments in English literature: none of these arguments proved particularly convincing.²³ Although

pedagogical works such as Abraham Fraunce's *Arcadian Rhetorike* used Philip Sidney's writing as a model for Ramist poetics in the vernacular, no direct evidence suggests that authors such as Sidney or Spenser themselves adopted Ramus' ideas, despite Sidney's close connections to Huguenot intellectual milieus and despite Spenser's deep and abiding friendship with the Ramist, Gabriel Harvey. As Andrew Hadfield points out in his recent biography of Spenser, "The impact of Ramist reforms on the teachings of logic and rhetoric has probably been exaggerated, and it is clear that many humanists throughout Europe thought that Ramus' methods were not sophisticated enough to deal with complex epistemological matters."²⁴ Ramism nevertheless influenced, albeit to a limited extent, conceptions of rhetorical poetics, and every major author in the period probably possessed at least a general familiarity with this reform movement.²⁵ More broadly, while Ramism, due to its crudity, may not have posed a serious threat to the prestige of rhetorical poetics, its ideas did forecast the distant future. By the time of the Restoration, the expansive conception of rhetorical theory was under threat as the Latin, *ratio*, became the English, "reason."²⁶ But rhetoric, like poetry, was controversial long before Ramus.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, eloquence, a category which included poetry and fiction as well as rhetoric, faced opposition and sometimes enmity from philosophers and intellectuals wary of idolatry and skeptical of secular creative endeavors. This hostility descended from Plato's attacks on mimesis, the ancient philosopher's belief that rhetoric and art encouraged moral and epistemic relativism, along with the associated argument that discursive *technes* were a kind of false counterfeiting because their practitioners either imitated observable reality or attempted

to convince auditors of the probability of unproved truth-claims.²⁷ In early modern England, these concerns combined with the Protestant skepticism over icons, the fear that influencing others via images was akin to idolatry, to produce a renewed inimicalness toward mimesis. Oratory and poetry themselves were perennially linked to visuality through the *ut pictura poesis* tradition, through persuasion's reliance on *enargia* and *enargeia*, and through the system of commonplaces.²⁸ Protestant, and even what could be described as "Puritan," attitudes toward visuality were both complex and constantly under negotiation, yet opposition to the discursive arts, even specific attacks on particular mediums such as antitheatrical tracts—Stephen Gosson's *Schoole of Abuse*, for example, or William Prynne's *Histriomastix*—clearly descended from this conflux of traditions. At the same time, eloquence had support from important classical figures such as Aristotle and Cicero, as well as from more contemporary authorities ranging from Erasmus to Melancthon to Julius Caesar Scaliger.²⁹ Rhetoric's centrality to what Jacob Burckhardt and others would later term "the Renaissance" can hardly be overstated. The study of eloquence constituted the lion's share of humanist education throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: the discursive arts were effectively synonymous with the new learning.³⁰ Despite this centrality, rhetoric and its associated discourses continued to function as spaces of contention and dispute up until the moment when the cultural authority of eloquence was shattered by the forces of the Enlightenment and modernity.

III: Accommodation, Social Change, and Romance

What is missing from this picture, this description made familiar by over thirty years of careful and exacting scholarship on rhetorical theory, humanist poetics, and classical

reception in the Renaissance? For starters, while this summation charts the contours of rhetorical poetics, explaining in detail how elements of rhetorical theory combined to serve as the atomistic units both of vernacular poetics and the actual composition of literary texts, it explains nothing about rhetoric as a theory of discourse. This portrait of Renaissance eloquence, moreover, only hints at how rhetoric and poetry functioned as a set of practices intended to facilitate social negotiation. While some classical rhetoricians, such as Aristotle, defined rhetoric as the study of argumentation, humanists in the Renaissance tended to favor a broader conception of the discipline in which the theorization of eloquence served as a model of interpretation as well as a method of persuasion. Only recently, however, due to important contributions like Kathy Eden's study of Renaissance hermeneutics, Robert Stillman's work on Philip Sidney's poetics, and Lorna Hutson's discussion of the origins of popular drama within forensic rhetoric, have literary historians begun to grasp how rhetorical theory developed into a participatory poetics in which audiences and authors alike were conceptualized as contributing to the construction of meaning.³¹ As late as 1994, Jean Grondin, in a text still often cited as the preeminent survey on the topic, confidently asserted that a philosophical tradition of hermeneutics did not exist prior to the nineteenth century. "The development of explicit hermeneutical reflection," according to Grondin, "bears the signature of modernity...what distinguishes the modern world-picture is its consciousness of being perspectival."³² Yet contrary to this narrative in which perspectival deliberation came into existence sometime between Schleiermacher and Nietzsche, rhetorical thinking contributed a foundation for a sophisticated theory of the

interaction between audience and text long before the birth of either Friedrich. As Nietzsche himself acknowledged, the beginnings of perspectivism lay much earlier.³³

Perspectivism, however, does not equate to relativism: Renaissance humanists acknowledged the effect of perspective in shaping textual reception, but they also saw the principle of accommodation as constraining meanings by establishing normative boundaries, even if these limits were understood as historically contingent and ontologically arbitrary. For the humanists and Protestant reformers who followed the example of Augustine, correctly interpreting scripture required audiences to determine the purpose and meaning of a passage, whether a moment in the Old or New Testament was an allegory, a parable, or a representation of an actual historical event; readers, in this view, needed to read according to “the spirit” of the text and not according to the literalness of “the letter.” By the early sixteenth century, Erasmus could chide an opponent for failing to read him “charitably,” meaning that his reader was distorting the author’s meaning and committing violence against his text. These theories greatly influenced Protestant intellectuals. Flacius Illyricus’ historicist theory of reading—interpretation as taking into account textual circumstances (*circumstantiae*) and context (*contextus*) so as to discover the *scopus* of a piece of discourse—imported conventions long familiar from discussions of rhetorical hermeneutics.³⁴

More than a theory of textual interpretation, humanists represented accommodation as a form of social adaption. The analysis of propriety supposedly encouraged ideals such as equity and prudence, as well as a tolerant and cosmopolitan mindset capable of empathetic perspectivism. Erasmus, in particular, portrayed accommodation as a form of irenicism in which speakers adapt their discourse and action

to one another in order to facilitate ethical social interaction.³⁵ In the case of reading creative works, accommodation habituated readers into the world of a fiction even as it habituated fiction into something useful. Humanists, of course, understood that interpretation was a social action, and as a consequence, they viewed even less explicitly “textual” interactions as analogous to reading. The concept encouraged identification between speakers and audiences who may have had little in common beyond their need to communicate. Given the intense strife in post-Reformation Europe, this concept’s immense appeal throughout the period needs little explication. Yet the Renaissance’s most abundant references to accommodation as mediation for discord occur not in public oratory but in humanist polemic. Jessica Wolfe has recently described how intellectuals such as Erasmus, Lorenzo Valla, Guillaume Bude, and Thomas More represented interpretive adaptation as a tool to arbitrate disputes between scholars in the aftermath of the Reformation and Counterreformation. Embracing figures as diverse as Saint Paul and Homer’s Odysseus as models for adapting to diverse or hostile audiences, these authors attempted to use the ancient practice to differentiate between the fecund and destructive aspects of Eris.³⁶ At the same time, humanists like Erasmus valued accommodating authors such as Homer, not just because their poetry provided models of decorous speakers such as Odysseus and Nestor, but because they saw works like the *Odyssey* as accessible to readerly participation. In his *Adages*, Erasmus praises Homer’s language as open to *detorqueri*, twisting, turning, or bending. Making practical use of ancient texts, Erasmus claims that the ‘process of accommodation “allows Homer’s ‘words [to be] stretched [*detorseris*] to give a vastly different sense,’ and new meanings infused into the most familiar Homeric lines” (CWE 35:282).³⁷ Erasmus’ example makes it clear that the

distinction between accommodation as social mediation and accommodation as a theory of literary interpretation did not merely blur throughout the Renaissance; for humanists interested in rhetoric and eloquence, this division simply did not exist.

This turn to accommodation partially explains why, again and again, in text after text, Renaissance authors depicted scenes of conflict between representatives of different classes, conflict between men and women, and conflict between members of different cultures and even races. These episodes test the limitations of oratory, representing conventional models of persuasion as either failing or as unethical when faced with the challenge of mediating between speakers and auditors of varying social statuses. Simultaneously, these self-reflexive tableaux often model the success of poetic conceits or discourses closely related to—or emblematic of—fiction as bridging the divide between heterogeneous interlocutors. These moments remove accommodation from the body of rhetorical theory for the benefit of *poesis*, representing poetry and fiction as better at adapting to diverse audiences and readerships than rival forms of eloquence. Borrowing a term from Rosemond Tuve, who long ago established the link between theories of decorum and the ability of images and metaphors to affect audiences in Renaissance literature, I want to suggest that scenes of social conflict from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century romance attempt to “prove” the superior “rhetorical efficacy” of *poesis*, often at the expense of competing branches of eloquence, and most specifically, oratory.³⁸

IV: Romance and Social Fracture

The fact that the fantasy of poetic efficacy repeatedly played out in permutations of romance is hardly a coincidence. I have already discussed the practice of conceptualizing romance within the tradition of Homeric *problemata*, but this interpretive scaffolding is only one reason why the genre could be used to explore social discord. Romance had long established conventions which were compatible with the representation, not just of social struggle, but of discursive accommodation. Standard features of romance, such as depictions of voyages to exotic lands; positive depictions of love affairs, both licit and illicit; portrayals of conflicts between warring nations; and a traditional focus on female interiority, all made the genre uniquely capable of expressing the anxieties of an age characterized by renewed religious warfare; economic centralization in urban areas at the expense of rural locations; an emerging globalized marketplace; the first stirrings of modern colonialism; and a host of secondary changes attendant upon these social disruptions. Romance's many fantastic elements provided a plausible distance from the direct representation of politically dangerous content while also imbuing representations of familiar social problems with a kind of alienation effect.

As significantly, romance's appeal to both elite and popular tastes made the genre an ideal medium to explore social fracture in the contexts of a post-Reformation Europe forever altered by the advent of print. Although the subjects of my chapters differ insofar as they react to different social changes, each text analyzed in this dissertation addresses the predicaments and opportunities created by an increasingly diverse audience. Two of the authors I discuss, Spenser and Wroth, worked closely with printers to see their romances published and distributed. Yet—due an expanding print culture—a text's reception could no longer be guaranteed by the circulation of manuscripts across

relatively homogenous, relatively familiar, readerships. The fact that print theoretically placed literary works into the hands of any man or woman capable of purchasing and reading a book created a preoccupation with scenes of exchange between unlike speakers. Paralleling the effect generated by circulation of printed books, the popularity of London's commercial theater made divergent reactions to a staged performance a virtual inevitability. Some playwrights, such as Ben Jonson, recoiled at this possibility; *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*, conversely, show Shakespeare transforming this qualified openness into part of the cultural value of theater. As Shakespeare's example shows, across mediums, the pervasiveness of using romance to address issues of reception operated according to a particular generic logic. Romance was a natural place to examine social exchange because this category of literature was at once stereotyped as addressing a female and lower-class readership and yet had an elite origin, a lineage which gestured toward prestigious sources such as Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* and Homer's *Odyssey*. The genre occupied a unique cultural space where it simultaneously functioned as a humanistic and a popular medium.

V: Conclusion—Four Chapters about Fantasy

My opening chapter examines the representation of deliberative oratory throughout the suppression of a peasants' revolt in the third book of Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, showing that this episode enacts the traditional critiques against mimesis only to contain these attacks within Sidney's representation of oratory and visual art. Sidney creates a demarcation between the visual efficacy of romance and competing discourses, a differentiation rooted in poetry's capacity for mediating gendered and classed relations.

Although this Arcadian intervention establishes the terms of contention between rhetoric and romance examined throughout my four sections, what each chapter's intervention entails depends upon the forces and events each text responds to. My second chapter, for example, situates *The Faerie Queene's* depiction of Artegall's debate with the Egalitarian Giant within the tradition of forensic hermeneutics and in relation to Tudor colonialism in Ireland. Edmund Spenser represents both Artegall and the Giant as unaccommodating interpreters of one other's language. The Knight's debate with the Giant eventually develops into a diorama of social disruption caused by indecorous speaking, a violent tableau which ultimately justifies Book Five's portrayal of English colonialism while also calling attention to the perilously thin line between persuasion and the expression of power.

Moving forward in time, my third chapter shows that William Shakespeare's late tragicomic-romances model metatheatrical devices speaking to and for an increasingly heterogeneous and cosmopolitan audience. *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* appropriate rhetoric's cultural authority for commercial theater, offering a fantasy about the efficacy of dramatic persuasion appealing to an audience containing men, women, merchants, servants, nobles and lawyers—in short, members of every category of person found in seventeenth-century London. Confronted by an audience drawn from an increasingly pluralistic city with a newly global reach, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* transform problematic representations of social strife into a commodity, offering playgoers a position of forensic detachment with which to view the events performed on stage. Responding to a different aspect of the Jacobean settlement, Mary Wroth's *Urania*, the subject of my final chapter, focuses on courtly intrigue and the conditions

which render participation within political life possible. Unlike Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, or Shakespeare's late tragicomic-romances, Wroth's great romance does not contrast oratory with poetic conceits in order to justify or legitimate fiction. Instead of making an argument about poetics and rhetoric, Wroth highlights discourses which bridge the chasm between personal expression and public utility. The portrayal of persuasion in the opening of the *Urania* subverts the conventions of romance after Sidney, preparing readers to accept the public circulation of particular forms of female language. Despite its differences from the previous subjects discussed in this dissertation, the *Urania* ultimately serves as a final instance of early modern romance establishing in relief the contours which will later be followed by the novel.

In the end, the early modern depiction of *poesis* as supra-accommodation functioned as a fantasy: it is highly unlikely that romances contributed to social cohesion in practice. This fantasy, moreover, works to obscure the actual roles played by creative writing within social relations. None of the texts I discuss depict poetry or performance altering the conditions causing the conflicts represented in their narratives, even if these texts do usually resolve the particular dispute scaffolding their plot. Yet in accruing authority for themselves, in legitimizing poetic making as the solution to strife, these romances do not, as in most ideological fantasies, directly gesture toward salving anxieties. True to the tradition of Homeric *problemata*, every episode I examine throughout this dissertation ends ambiguously and uncomfortably. By offering a discursive solution beyond the level of plotting or narrative, these texts invite audience participation, calling attention to the insolvability of social in-cohesion. *The Faerie Queene* represents the murder of the Leveling Giant as a startlingly violent act of

avoidance; the *Arcadia* depicts Pyrocles' speech before the marauding peasants as contributing to the violations of order and hierarchy the prince's oration condemns; and both *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* end ambiguously, with strategically placed silences creating a vacuum in place of expected reconciliation. By advocating a participatory poetics, by inviting an audience's judgment, these moments defer the pleasures of resolution and provoke questions about the connectivity of social relations, discourse, and audience discernment. These texts are products of the early modern imaginary, but they are also highly interrogative representations of social fracture which, seen from the right angle, can help us, in Adorno's vocabulary, "establish that relation between objects which is the irrevocable source of all judgement."³⁹ Stated in a different vocabulary, in the language Artegall uses to describe the Egalitarian Giant, these portrayals of eloquence provide a balance with which "to weigh the world anew" (V.ii.34.1).

CHAPTER 1

COUNTERFEITING RHETORIC: POETICS AND VIOLENCE IN SIDNEY'S *ARACADIA* AND *THE DEFENCE OF POESY*

The question of why the *Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* includes an episode in which its protagonists ferociously clash with a peasants' revolt has long puzzled Sidney's readers.⁴⁰ The extraordinarily detailed and surprisingly violent imagery found in the suppression of the rebellion, the descriptions of limbs hacked off, faces disfigured, and poor men brutalized for what appears to be comedic affect ruptures the generic modes of Sidney's romance, acting like a gash across the narrative, dissevering generic and tonal expectations just as the blows wrought against the peasants inflict wounds on their bodies. Understandably, critical attention on this subject has focused on Sidney's attitude toward popular rebellion, the relationship of the *Arcadia* to its social contexts, and the situation of this uprising within early modern resistance theory.⁴¹ Sidney's narrative, however, complicates such evaluations by encouraging readers to see the rebellion not as a revolt springing from specific grievances, but as a consequence of a seditious speech delivered by Clinias, a lower-class orator acting as an agent for a foreign and hostile power.⁴² Adding to this emphasis, the skirmish terminates with a sophisticated but devious political oration delivered by the disguised and cross-dressed Pyrocles. The uprising, then, both begins and ends with morally suspect acts of persuasion spoken by figures from different ends of the class hierarchy.⁴³ So while the purpose behind the uprising's inclusion in the *Arcadia* remains far from obvious, the cause both of the rebellion and its termination is made perfectly clear: deliberative oratory.⁴⁴ With its focus on the two orators and the response they generate in their audience, the text foregrounds

issues of communication and social order, inviting readers to ask about the connection between the eloquence and carnage inflicted upon the peasants—and about the association of violence with language more generally.

But why would Sidney portray oratory in this unflattering way? Poetry and rhetoric, after all, possess deep affinities, and despite recent work on the emergence of poetics in the Renaissance, historians and critics still often take for granted that sixteenth-century writers made little distinction between poetical and rhetorical theory.⁴⁵ Don Paul Abbot, for instance, observes that "the rules of a classical oration were applied to every kind of discourse ... There is no very clear demarcation between rhetoric and poetry in the Renaissance."⁴⁶ This chapter attempts to show that such declarations oversimplify a complex relationship, that the conclusion to the peasants' uprising represents eloquence as manipulation and as a kind of violence against auditors and the larger social body. At the same time, the episode's highly self-reflexive imagery, particularly a vivid description of the maiming of an artisan painter that echoes the vocabulary of Sidney's *Defence*, indirectly calls attention to the role, not just of rhetoric, but of poetry and visual art: three forms of discourse almost always linked together in Renaissance-era rhetorical and poetic theory. Given Sidney's inherently visual theory of poetics and given the presence of a painter on the scene, this moment's focus on *ekphrasis*, the vivid description of a work of art embedded in a larger text, hardly surprises. Yet Aristotle, Cicero, and others identify the figure with the revelation of ethos, associating *ekphrastic* description with presenting a model of the world which clarifies the relationship between individual and communal history—as the description of Aeneas' shield portraying the glorious future of the hero's descendants in the *Aeneid*, or the portrayal of the tapestries encountered by Britomart in

Book III of *The Faerie Queene* both attest to.⁴⁷ In spite of this tradition, Sidney's artisan painter functions as an emblem of passivity. Unlike Sidney's ideal poet in the *Defence*, he attempts to use art to delight without teaching any sense of social good. The painter's mutilation, which prevents the artisan from actually fulfilling the promise of *ekphrasis* that his presence intimates, grotesquely embodies the deficiencies of mimesis uselessly imitating a fallen world.

While Sidney clearly invokes the association of rhetoric and art with poetry, using commonplaces that tie the three forms of image-making together, he doesn't simply marry his romance to either oratory or painting. Sidney instead uses this episode to manifest the precepts of the *Defence* within the *Arcadia*, creating a demarcation between poetry and other forms of eloquence. His narrative diligently, albeit implicitly, contrasts the deliberative oratory used by Pyrocles and the passivity of the maimed painter against the scope of Sidnean poetics as embodied in the descriptive language of the *Arcadia* itself, a conceptualization of art enacting a different kind of *ekphrasis* which participates in the emergence of the poetical from the rhetorical. Ultimately, the engagement with the rhetorical tradition in the *New Arcadia* and the *Defence of Poesy* establishes the terms of the *ut pictura poesis* debates in English, a controversy which has persisted from Sidney's time to our own.

I: Rebellion, Violent Language, and Painting

Sidney links the uprising to evil language well before introducing the oratory of Pyrocles or Clinias. In the disguise of Dorus, Musidorus severs a rebel's limbs from his body, making "his arms and legs go complain to the earth how evil their masters had kept

them."⁴⁸ The cross-dressed Pyrocles likewise cleaves the head of an insubordinately speaking butcher who had been "calling Zelmane all the vile names of a butcherly eloquence" so that "she left nothing but the nether jaw, where the tongue still wagged" (281). A drunken miller begs for life before being "thrust through ... from one ear to the other; which took it very unkindly, to feel such news before they heard of them, instead of hearing, to be put to such feeling" (282). The *Arcadia's* narrator mocks the peasants for their class position and occupation, but nearly all of these jibes also concern their communication, and most of the narrator's language even describes violence as though it were a form of expression. The description of "butcherly eloquence" contrasts the paucity of the peasants' verbal ability with Pyrocles' aristocratic, learned, and extremely effective formal oratory, showing the measure of the *Arcadia's* noble characters against the buffoonery of "churls and villains," consequently naturalizing both class positions. But this language also prepares readers to associate eloquence with violence.

The presence of the artist at the skirmish, the final victim of the brutal and inglorious tumult, merely represents the most obvious connection between Renaissance rhetorical theory and the *Arcadia's* violent tableau. But while not unique, Sidney still hazards a danger in introducing the painter. Sidnean poetics justifies its existence through its ability to act as "a speaking picture—with this end, to teach and delight" (219-22). According to the *Defence*, the persuasiveness of imagery depends upon *energeia*, ocular vividness, and *enargeia*, lively narration or description—both of which impress themselves upon the minds of audiences in order to reveal "Ideas" or "fore-conceits," matrices of *notitiae* which grant the "knowledge to lift up the mind from the dungeon of the body to the enjoying of his own divine essence" (306-8).⁴⁹ Adapting the ancient

commonplace of *ut pictura poesis*, the *Defence* and the *Arcadia* both associate poetry with visual images, and whether through *ekphrastic* description or through the emblematic depiction of characters and scenes, when Sidney refers to visual art, he simultaneously calls attention to poetry: in the case of the mutilated artisan, a deficient kind of poetry, or at the very least, a deficient kind of image-making closely associated with Sidney's "unelected vocation."⁵⁰

The artisan painter only attends the conflict between the two princes and the peasants in the first place so as "to counterfeit the skirmishing between the Centaurs and the Lapiths," the very specificity of his subject and its similarity to the uprising signaling that his presence inadvertently comments on the action he witnesses (282). Yet as *ekphrasis*, this attempted "counterfeiting" should be highly resonant. The figure, after all, traditionally does more than comment on identity. Page DuBois points out that *ekphrasis* in poetry from Homer to Edmund Spenser chronicles a vision of a larger cultural history in which "man's reading of the past" becomes "part of the attempt to control the present and shape the future of the human community."⁵¹ But in sharp contrast to both classical and early modern uses of the figure, the painter models an antisocial and useless counterfeiting, one that neither moves nor persuades, and may even be a form of deception in the sense that his adaption of a "real life" conflict into a distant mythical fantasy removes the uprising from its social context, from the framework that makes it explicable as an event. As the narrative progresses, the passivity of the maimed painter, like the amoral oratory used by Pyrocles and Clinias, becomes more and more linked to violence—though unlike its sister examples, a violence actually inflicted upon the image-maker himself. The moral logic of the *Arcadia* punishes and mocks the artisan because he

detaches eloquence from the specific capacity Sidney sees as distinctive of true poetry: its ability to reproduce an image that exists beyond the immediately perceivable, what the *Defence* refers to as the "golden" world, but which post-romantics might think of as the ability to imagine a different reality, a better set of circumstances and conditions. Because the painter cannot conceive of anything except an image that resembles the grotesque circumstances he witnesses, these circumstances victimize him.

Although the painter's attempted art almost lacks content, the *Arcadia's* own speaking-picture describing his maiming draws on and participates in a well-known and highly resonant *locus communis* the late sixteenth century had inherited from the classical period. The description of the maiming directly imitates, not Plato or Aristotle as might be expected given the subject matter, but a similar moment from Statius' *Thebaid*, 8.551-2, transformed, however, in a number of significant ways from its ancient model.⁵² Statius' epic describes a brutalized singer, explicitly an "*ante comes Musis*," a former companion of the muses, a poet, who "*cupit ille tamen pugnasque uirosque / forsitan ut caneret*," desired to witness a battle, perchance to find the subject of a song.⁵³ Statius' initial designation of the artist as a "former companion of the muses" holds the figure's exact identity in suspense until announcing his intention to write a song based on the battle. But in the *Arcadia*, the maimed artist does not desire a model to base his verse on at all. Instead of being a composer of songs without any qualification, he merely bears a certain resemblance to a poet. Sidney's translation of the poet into a painter occults the sentence of this passage slightly—what it means as opposed to what it literally says—shaping it into a multivalent analogy. The transformation of the poet into an artist also calls attention to the role played by visual proofs in persuasion, directing readers to the

"speaking pictures" so important to Sidney's poetic theory, to the right kind of "counterfeiting." Finally, the victim's identity as a painter and not specifically a poet has the advantage of allowing the connotations of this emblematic figure to extend backward to the oratory that is the matter of this episode, and forward to its sentence as a complex and self-reflexive work of meta-fiction.

Regardless of Sidney's borrowings from his model in Statius, the painter simultaneously exists within an additional discourse that Sidney engages with throughout his *Defence*: the ancient war between poetry and rhetoric, on the one hand, and philosophy, on the other. Nearly every attack on the mimetic arts from Plato to Stephen Gosson invoked the comparison between painting and oratory or painting and rhetoric, alongside the use of the word "counterfeiting" or its equivalent; but the defenders of literary arts, including Sidney in his own treatise on poetics, also made extensive use of this *locus communis*. Using an avowedly Aristotelian terminology, Sidney directly calls poetry a "mimesis," or "a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth" (220-1). Because Sidney's critical theory relies so thoroughly on ocular power for its efficacy, the *Defence* and the *Arcadia* both take great care to differentiate "the speaking picture" of true poetry from its rivals in imitation, image makers—connected to rhetoric through Sidney's digression—who fail to "teach and delight." This designation includes inferior versifiers whose art resembles the oratory and painting depicted throughout the revolt's suppression. The three general kinds of poets in the *Defence*, for instance, differ based upon how they create images, what exactly these images imitate, and for what purpose these imitations are performed: nearly the same set of distinctions I have been tracing in my discussion of the maiming of the artist and the two orations that frame the peasants'

uprising. Seeing the battle as a source of entertainment, the unfortunate painter never harnesses the power of images for anything except amusement: "being delighted to see the effects of blows," he in turn expects to give delight through the reproduction of what he sees and nothing more (281). Unlike the artisan, Clinias moves his audience to take action but has no higher ambitions (the *Arcadia* does not directly portray his initial oratory, but readers can infer this from its effects). Pyrocles, the most effective image-maker within the narrative, both delights and moves the peasants; but far from teaching his auditors, he manipulates them into taking an action beneficial to his self-interest but arguably harmful to the larger community, first deceiving and then causing the peasants to turn violently against one another. Seen together as models of discourse brought before the judgment of the *Arcadia's* reader, these three illustrations of "counterfeiting" are limited at best, and malicious at worst.

The *Defence*, on the other hand, argues for a poetry without a horizon. Writing that "[t]he chief, [poets] both in antiquity and excellency, were they that did imitate the inconceivable excellencies of God," Sidney uses antanaclasis, his troping "excellency" as preeminence into "excellencies" as a title of honor, to present the rhetorical accommodation characteristic of the best image makers as boundless, even capable of mediating a theophany for its audience (223-4).⁵⁴ Presumably, when Sidney writes that King David "maketh you, as it were, see God coming in his majesty," he groups the psalm-writer within this category of poet (141). Rendering the inconceivable observable may at first seem paradoxical, but as Robert Stillman points out, Sidnean accommodation extends beyond an audience's adaptation of content into meaning. Poetry's primacy as the *architektonike* science rests, in part, on its capacity to accommodate divine *notitiae* into a

form comprehensible for its audience, its "ability to give substance to Ideas innately unknowable apart from their exemplification."⁵⁵

In contrast to true poets, the second, inferior kind of versifier resembles the philosopher and historian because of the similar objects they imitate—things and people that have the disadvantage of historical existence. Because of this limitation, Sidney even hedges his bets on whether the second type of versifier really counts, properly speaking, as a poet, quipping, "whether they be poets or not, let grammarians dispute" (244). In cataloguing these types of imitators, Sidney immediately settles for an analogy between a bad poet and a painter who merely copies the objects available to his senses. According to the *Defence*, between the greater and lesser types exist

such a kind of difference, as betwixt the meaner sort of painters, who counterfeit only such faces as are set before them, and the more excellent, who having no law but wit ... most properly do imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be, but range only reined with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be and should be.⁵⁶ (245-55)

The painter's inclusion in the skirmish, unnecessary as a matter of plotting or characterization, highlights the *Arcadia's* own status as a kind of discourse, stressing the difference between the romance and the language it portrays. With the traditional arguments leveled against art confined to oratory and naive realism, the romance indirectly represents poesy as a more accommodating method of influencing an audience, usurping rhetoric's traditional place as the social force which first creates and then cements communities and nations together. Isocrates, to cite a familiar example of this kind of justification, memorably describes the rhetorical ideal that Sidney transfers to poetry:⁵⁷

Because there has been implanted in us the power to persuade each other and to make clear to each other whatever we desire, not only have we escaped the life of wild beasts, but we have come together and founded cities and made laws and invented arts; and, generally speaking, there is no institution devised by man which the power of speech has not helped us to establish. For this it is which has laid down laws concerning things just and unjust, and things honourable and base; and if it were not for these ordinances, we should not be able to live with one another.

The *Defence* makes a nearly identical argument, but substitutes the civilizing function of rhetoric with poetry (3-16; 66-77). Something similar occurs in this episode when Sidney provides readers with a glimpse of what social relations look like when this ideal fails.

Of course, portrayals of the failure of the Isocratic ideal verge on ubiquity throughout the period. Rhetoric, controversial since its inception, has perennially been a target of suspicion. This moment's significance lies in how clearly and self-consciously it manifests the precepts of the *Defence* within the *Arcadia*, and what this tells us about the emergence of the poetical from the rhetorical in the English Renaissance. Since Plato, rhetoric and poetry have both been attacked as false semblances of reality, as second-order counterfeitings. Sidney responds to the traditional accusations made against eloquence by delineating between inferior simulacrum of a fallen reality and a speaking picture which imitates *notitiae*, adapting these "divine ideas" into a form comprehensible to readers while relying on audiences' own innate capacities to enter into and participate in the world of a fiction.⁵⁸ Because the *Arcadia* models the various forms of counterfeiting, the speaking picture of the peasants' uprising makes concrete the abstract principles of Sidney's treaty while also demonstrating what it adopts and where it differs from conventional rhetoric. Sidney scholars, often underestimating the participatory character of the exchange between text and readers in the period and often assuming the necessity of embodying *exempla* in morally attractive characters, sometimes struggle to

explain how the *Defence's* theories on exemplarity relate to the *Arcadia's* practice. The peasants' revolt, however, effectively models a form of accommodating image-making by using painting and oratory as foils.

II: Demarcations

In light of these divisions, Abbot's claim about a lack of distinction between rhetoric and poetry in the Renaissance needs to be qualified.⁵⁹ Insofar as rhetoric acts as a general and comprehensive theory of communication, Abbot's statement remains both representative and accurate. Renaissance poetics inherited a vocabulary almost entirely derived from classical rhetorical theory (this, of course, holds true for contemporary literary studies as well—as any English major who has ever noticed a metaphor, simile, synecdoche, trope, or any similar concept can tell you). Regardless, this picture of Renaissance poetics as unreservedly identical with rhetoric obscures the extent to which early modern authors, particularly authors associated with the Sidney circle, labored to distinguish the two sciences as different modes of interaction. While William Scott, for instance, as an inheritor of the Scaligerian-Sidnean tradition, sees rhetoric as containing poetry conceptually in the same way that natural philosophy contains medicine, Scott still differentiates poetics from rhetoric "as an art of imitation, or an instrument of reason ... to feign or represent things, which delight to teach and to move us to good."⁶⁰ Sidney, to give an even more pertinent example, very actively establishes a boundary between spoken-oratory and written-poetry, even if the relationship between the two arts is successional, with poetry taking rhetoric's traditional function as a civilizing influence but not wholly divorced from its sister art. Within the *Defence*, rhetoric and theology are

the only realistic candidates for *architectonike* science not directly dealt with in Sidney's *divisio*, *confirmatio*, or *refutio* proper, despite the fact that in most humanist programs, the study of eloquence would have been the leading aspirant for the title of queen of the sciences.⁶¹ Sidney instead handles rhetoric in a digression prompted by a discussion of the different kinds of poetry. Sidney's seemingly cheeky apology for this aside, his claim that he deserves to be "pounded for straying from poetry to oratory," but that "both have such affinity in the wordish consideration that I think this digression will make my meaning receive the fuller understanding" (1454-55), becomes more resonant upon recognizing that Sidney here alludes to rhetoric's place next to poetry as a similar but inferior kind of image-making.

Sidney conceptualizes poetry as semi-self-contained and self-referential, yet not wholly autonomous nor divorced from historical contingency. The accommodation of text to readers, readers to text—ideas into speaking pictures which are then received by audiences—anchors artifice to moral and even political purposes. The practices of the *Arcadia's* painter and rhetoricians operate noticeably differently. The artisan painter limits his counterfeiting to purely aesthetic goals. Nearly the painter's antitheses, Pyrocles and Clinias exemplify a form of social engagement which has great efficacy but no ethical basis. Taken altogether, the romance's unfavorable depiction of deliberative oratory stresses the social dimensions of Sidney's own medium, offering a fantasy of language-use which can do what the speeches in this episode fail at: mediate benevolently between interlocutors of different classes and genders.

III: Pyrocles and the Well-Skilled Painter/ Poetry and the Body Politic

The plot of the second half of the *Arcadia* hinges on an interrogation of categories. The conflict between the peasants and the *Arcadia's* aristocratic protagonists, in particular, stems from a series of violations: contraventions of gender and hierarchy—breaches of ethical norms figured by the text in this moment as bodily injuries. Sidney portrays even the speeches of Pyrocles and Clinias as analogous to the physical maiming of the unfortunate artisan. Yet the painter's attempted subject, his counterfeiting "of the skirmishing between the Centaurs and the Lapiths," also points unflatteringly toward the romance's protagonists, with the hybridity of the centaurs discomfortingly alluding to the compromised identities of the disguised princes, and principally to the cross-dressed Pyrocles, who in this version of the Centauromachy is both the order-restoring Theseus and the dissolute centaur, Eurytion.⁶² Emblematically, Pyrocles as Zelmane and Musidorus as Dorus use disguise, the former as a member of the opposite gender and the latter as a member of a different class, in order to violate Duke Basilius' daughters, just as Eurytion attempts to rape Pirithous' bride in the Centauromachy. If comparing the princes' activity to sexual violence seems to go too far in describing what eventually develops into an elopement, recall that the Musidorus of the *Old Arcadia* actually does attempt to rape Pamela.

The *New Arcadia's* references to gendered conflict in this moment derive, in part, from the original of the narrative tableau the artisan painter hopes to render literally visible: Ovid's description of the Centauromachy in the twelfth book of the *Metamorphosis* (the artisan seems unaware of Ovid's description, but Sidney's text clearly alludes to the Roman poet's description of the mythological battle).⁶³ Ovid frames the disrupted wedding within an account of gender performance, transformation, and sexual

violation—all of which further point to Pyrocles' morally dubious behavior and speech. Ovid's narrator for this episode, the elderly and garrulous Nestor, bookends his description of the battle with a story of the final victim of the centaurs' desolate rage, the female rape-victim turned male warrior, Caeneus/Ceny. According to Nestor, when provided a boon by Poseidon after the god brutally ravaged her while she walked by the sea, "Ceny" asked to become a man so that she would never again endure sexual predation. Newly transformed into "Caeneus," the warrior roamed Thessaly, seeking heroic adventures before being killed at the conclusion of the Centauromachy, a course of events which startlingly parallels and reverses Pyrocles' activity.⁶⁴ Before perishing in an attempt to preserve the sanctity of a wedding, Caeneus transforms from a wronged woman into a male hero in a failed attempt to escape further patriarchal violence. Pyrocles, the inverted mirror-image of his ancient counterpart, adopts the identity of a woman in order to enable his own masculine prerogatives, sparking a set of troubling resonances which strongly color his interactions with the peasants.

The prince's speech, moreover, directly harms his audience and indirectly harms the state of Arcadia. The prince begins his oration before the surviving rebels by employing *philophronesis*, the pacification of an adversary by use of mild speech or promises: Zelmane's (Pyrocles') insistence that "she had something to say unto them, that would please them," followed by his flattering remarks about his comfort in speaking in front of such a valorous and sensible assembly (283). Defined as a gentle speech that either attempts to assuage an auditor's anger or as language that fosters a friendly relationship between speaker and audience, *philophronesis* becomes useful, according to Henry Peacham, when an orator needs "to appeaseth the malice of enemies, molifieth the

cruel hearts of tyrants, saveth the life of innocents, and preventeth the destruction of cities and countries."⁶⁵ Yet *philophronesis* possesses ambivalent connotations. The figure can advance civic good, but contemporary rhetorical manuals also cite it as a favorite device of the dissembler and hypocrite. Peacham's *Caution* warns that bad orators use this tactic to deceitfully advance their own personal goals, telling readers to beware false acquiescence, "the *counterfeit* submission of hypocrites" which "is opposed to the true use of this figure."⁶⁶ A liar uses this device, according to Peacham, not to supplicate humbly for mercy or gentleness, but to create the false image, "the counterfeit" of true supplication in order to evade consequences.

Pyrocles roots his assuaging, appealing language in this type of deception, inventing a ruse dependent upon the counterfeiting of a false identity. A country farmer initially convinces his fellows to listen to "Zelmane" because of physical attraction, having become ensnared "in a little affection ... hoping by his kindness to have some kind of good of her" (283). The narrative later even states that he only helps the faux-Amazon so "that he might have Zelmane for his wife" (284). While well-meaning, Pyrocles uses impersonation as a form of seduction, allowing him to ingratiate himself first with Basilius' court and then with the peasants. In both cases, the prince gains entrance into others' confidences by virtue of the attraction they feel for him, an attraction that blends categories, defying social divisions in order to infiltrate spaces that otherwise would remain closed. More still, as Helen Cooper points out, Zelmane's behavior sharply contrasts with the modesty of the actual Zelmane, the doomed young woman who perished without revealing her love to Pyrocles: "She had continued to be restrained by her feminine self-enfacement and modesty; he continues to behave with all the self-

confidence of a man. His cross-dressing never amounts to an assumption of social gender."⁶⁷ To Cooper's point, I would add that Pyrocles' activity also contrasts with his model in the *Metamorphoses*: Caeneus.

Despite the moral dubiousness of Pyrocles' impersonation, the prince's *exordium* constructs an ethos of a female speaker and foreigner compelled to speak out because of the unnaturalness of the peasants' rebellion: "An unused thing it is, and I think heretofore unseen, O Arcadians, that a woman should give public counsel to men; a stranger to the country people" (285). Opening his oration by referring to his (temporarily assumed) gender immediately captures the attention of his audience, calling their focus to his body and physical attractiveness while setting the stage for a speech in which the faux-Amazon tropes on what it means to be effeminate and strange, gradually convincing the enraged peasants of the decorum of a foreigner and woman speaking to an assembly of male citizens. Pyrocles turns apparent weakness, his status as a woman and a stranger, into a strength, stymieing any objections to his presence by telling the assemblage that "the strangeness of your action makes that used for virtue which your violent necessity imposeth" (285). In order to show the appropriateness of a woman addressing a group of men, Pyrocles packs three closely related figures into two dense sentences, all anchored by his use of the word "strange": *polyptoton*, the repetition of a word in a different form; *antanaclasis*, multiple uses of a word in at least two of its senses; and *conduplicatio*, the repetition of a single word or words throughout a paragraph. Taken together, the figures change "strangeness" from a property inherent within Pyrocles to a quality located within his audience. "Strangeness" becomes associated with femininity, unnaturalness, and the inability to govern oneself, attributes Pyrocles locates in the rebelling subjects as well as

in his (her) own person, establishing an affinity between his gendered (female) body and the rebels' actions. Masculinity, in turn, becomes linked to self-government, itself connected to obedience as the prince tells his auditors that "a woman may well speak to such men who have forgotten all manlike government; a stranger may with reason instruct such subjects that neglect due points of subjection" (285). An Amazon can, in short, speak to the rebels as equals without violating decorum because they have effeminized themselves through their rebellion against Basilius.

Not all of Pyrocles' argumentation explicitly depends upon his status as a woman, but his assumed gender always underscores the effect of his logic. For instance, the prince offers his listeners the familiar commonplace of the family unit's dependence upon obedience to the monarch:

Do you think them fools that saw you should enjoy your vines, your cattle, no, not your wives and children without government? And that there could be no government without a magistrate and no obedience where every one upon his own private passion may interpret the doings of the rulers? (286)

Recognizable as a third order enthymeme, Pyrocles' proof gives his listeners the first premise: no government without magistrate; and the second premise: no magistrate without obedience; but he leaves his listeners to add the logical conclusion: without obedience, no government. The use of *anadiplosis* and *incrementum* makes his logic seem inevitable; magistrate seems to naturally derive from government and obedience naturally from magistrate, but much of this proof's strength also comes from Zelmane's ethos itself. "She" seems to have authority to speak of the value of hierarchy because "she" appears to have nothing to gain from its maintenance. As a woman and foreigner, Zelmane possesses lower status than the people she persuades. Her own proofs group her with cattle and vineyards, material possessions dependent upon government for their

availability to the all-male peasants. Pyrocles adopts female disguise without discarding his privilege as an aristocratic male, ventriloquizing a female speaker endorsing her own subjugation. At this juncture, given the reader's privileged access to knowledge of Pyrocles' duplicity, Sidney's representation of rhetoric and painting encourages a form of accommodation which very much resembles an ideology critique of Zelmane's speech.

Although the text only indirectly alludes to princes' activity through the painter's proposed subject, the connection between art and oratory itself would have been obvious to a sixteenth-century reader. Rhetorical theorists throughout the period frequently compared the beauty of a well-formed and proportionate oration to both the body of a person and the body of the community held together through language. Philip Melanchthon, for example, makes the analogy in his famous defense of rhetoric. Referring to the role played by ornamentation, he explains that an orator is eloquent when his speech is harmonious, "just as in fashioning bodies one finally obtains elegance when all members harmonize with one another in just proportion."⁶⁸ Melanchthon relates the construction of orations to creating visual artworks, specifically the imitation of the human body by painters. William Scott uses the same analogy to describe poetry, noting that the "proper duty of the poet is ... to frame a well-proportioned body," with beauty in verse arising from "an apt and graceful featuring and disposition of the parts and members between themselves to the composing of the whole."⁶⁹ The word "members," in both Melanchthon's and Scott's phrasings, simultaneously refers to body parts and to the elements of persuasion, suggesting the analogy between auditors, participants in a community constructed through language, and limbs fashioned onto the body politic by the chisel of an orator's or poet's words. Unfortunately for Sidney's artist, his maiming

reverses the trajectory of Melanchthon's comparison. While passively observing the battle, his hands are stricken off when Dorus mistakes him for a rebel: "[T]he painter returned well-skilled in wounds, but with never a hand to perform his skill" (282). Sidney's trope on "skilled" changes the word's usual definition of "competence" to its secondary meaning of "knowledge," mocking the artist by assigning him the very quality he sought at the skirmish. He now both knows what a wound looks like and has knowledge of how it feels to receive one, but cannot convert one kind of "skill" into the other.

Sidney's play on words originates in the artist's original purpose in witnessing the uprising. Recall that the painter, "needing a model" to base his work on, "had been very desirous to see some notable wounds, to be able to more lively express them" (282). In light of the emphasis in the *Defence of Poesy* on the importance of imitating ideas and fore-conceits instead of the perceptible world, the desire to copy something already existing is a damning attribute. In choosing historical reality as his model, the painter sacrifices art's utilitarian purpose of leading men and women to virtue in favor of a vulgar form of naive realism. "To express" is a synonym for bleeding out, of course, which the painter does upon being attacked by Dorus; but the term also hints at conveying meaning through words and gestures while suggesting graphic representation. Like "counterfeiting," then, the connotations of "express" and "model" extend both to poetics and to rhetoric, connotations that link the different kinds of communication to the human body portrayed through art. But the analogy goes further than these connotations suggest.

Melanchthon links the integrated body of the state and the physical body portrayed by painting. Arguing against opponents of rhetoric who claim that a true

method for communication does not exist, he asks, "Can a painter correctly imitate a body if he has no system for manipulating his pencil, his hand is moved by chance, and his lines are drawn without art?"⁷⁰ Melanchthon's description once more ironically shadows the fate of Sidney's artisan painter who, "well-skilled," has the knowledge needed to imitate, but without his hands is literally incapable of manipulating his pencil or drawing out his lines. The theologian isn't just affirming that painting and oratory are similar because both arts require method to be "skillful," however. For Melanchthon, painting and oratory are both mimetic and, like painting, oratory is a kind of visual performance. The orator influences an audience by creating a picture either of how things are (epideictic), should be (deliberative), or were (forensic), and all of these categories are similarly available to painters. But Melanchthon also follows Cicero and Aristotle in asserting that truly eloquent speaking hides its status as oratory. When rhetoric calls attention to itself, it doesn't function as mimesis; it instead becomes "disproportionate" and "completely monstrous and absurd."⁷¹ Oratory, according to Melanchthon, should teach while hiding the fact it is doing so behind the auditors' natural delight in language. As in Sidney's view of poetry, Melanchthon's understanding of eloquence is traceable to the same canard adapted in the *Defence*, the idea that a good orator should "instruct, delight, and move the minds of his audience."⁷² Neither Pyrocles nor the painter, unfortunately, pay any heed to this ancient commonplace.

The art of Pyrocles and the painter instead resembles another famous description of rhetoric that links oratory to painting in Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Sophist*. In the former, Plato's Socrates, reflecting on a written speech by the sophist Lysias, claims that both painting and writing are imitative arts. More still, Socrates tells Phaedrus that painting

and writing are analogous because "they stand before us as though they were really alive, but if you question them they maintain a most majestic silence."⁷³ Writing and painting have a kind of superficial permanence, "but if you ask them anything ... from a desire to be instructed, they go on telling you the same thing for ever."⁷⁴ In short, they fail to instruct because of their passivity, their lack of adaptability, and their divorce from the reality they so poorly copy. Written orations and painting seem to impart information, but their status as *imitatio* prevents the dissemination of true knowledge, associated by Plato and his followers with dialectic. In the *Sophist*, the Stranger goes even further, stating that rhetoricians are actually controversialists, not truth tellers, and for them, debating is a kind of making. To the Stranger, rhetoric is the art of constructing spoken images of all things, and this imitation has two forms: likeness-making and apparition-making, the making of true and of distorted images—the latter, of course, being synonymous with illusions. The aural equivalent of a painter, rhetoricians "cheat the ear, exhibiting images of all things in a shadow play of discourse, so as to make ... [audiences] believe that they are hearing the truth."⁷⁵

Against this conception of rhetoric as a kind of false counterfeiting, defenders of eloquence such as Cicero and Melanchthon could always point to their art's utility, its ability to civilize and inculcate morality in listeners who lack either the capacity or leisure to engage in dialectic or philosophic discourse. Yet both Pyrocles and the painter sever their image-making from this social function. Like Pyrocles before his captivated audience, the painter's morally ambiguous art dissembles. In Plato's terms, it provides the appearance of truth without teaching. In a different vocabulary, one used by William Scott to contrast visual art with poetry, the painter's art imitates "the dead and tongueless

shapes set out in colours only."⁷⁶ Sidney's narrative highlights an amoral disconnect between naive imitation and morality by repeatedly emphasizing the painter's passivity. When Dorus kills a miller, for instance, "the blow astonished quite" the "poor painter who had stood by with a pike in his hands" (282). Dorus' final victim does not even intentionally join the mad rush to attack Basilius; instead he "is carried by the stream of this company" (282). The painter's inactivity, his inertness in the face of a chaotic situation, partially illustrates (and for poetry, at least, ultimately exorcizes) the Platonic insistence on the disconnect between reality and mimesis—but his passivity also markedly contrasts with the participatory and accommodating poetics endorsed by Sidney.

IV: Sidney and Rhetoric

Sidney participated in a tradition of Scaligerian rhetorical poetics throughout his literary career. While at Oxford, he reportedly translated the first two books of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* from the Greek.⁷⁷ More famously, the *Defence* argues on behalf of poetry by taking the form of a judicial oration, even as its digression slyly differentiates between poetry and rhetoric as competing modes of discourse. Likewise, *The Lady of May* clearly exists within a tradition of participatory oratorical debate. Nearly as obviously, Sidney fills the *Arcadia* with oratorical display. Yet throughout the romance's many depictions of eloquence, Sidney often portrays oratory (a subject not entirely identical with rhetoric) as either effective but morally dubious or as moral but inefficacious. Book One of the *New Arcadia*, for instance, contains a set piece which superficially resembles the peasants' revolt: the Helots' uprising against the tyrannous Lacedaemon king. The two uprisings

contain obvious formal and schematic similarities. Like the peasants' revolt, the Helots' rebellion is a popular insurrection that Sidney's princely protagonists become involved with. In each case, a disguised Pyrocles temporarily resolves the conflict using oratory: an oration before the peasants ends their uprising; a series of speeches puts a stop to the battle between the slaves and their Spartan oppressors. In spite of the *Arcadia's* portrayal of the Helots' revolt as more legitimate than the peasants' uprising, Pyrocles' eloquence again harms his audience. Although the Helots express reluctance to accept peace terms of dubious favorability, Pyrocles' "general orations" overcome this initial resistance (42). However, the later books of the *New Arcadia* reveal that as soon as the prince departs, the Lacedaemon ruler breaks the truce and the conflict resumes. Pyrocles' powerful but misleading eloquence undoes the good he accomplishes in leading the rebellion.⁷⁸

Not every depiction of rhetoric in the *Arcadia* solely relates to lower-class rebellion. In a moment thematically related both to the Helots' revolt and the peasants' uprising through its discussion of social hierarchy, Cecropia debates Pamela on the nature of order in the cosmos in Book Three. This episode contains two dazzling representations of oratory, but neither speaker convinces the other of her views, despite the remarkableness of Cecropia's description of an epicurean universe, and despite ultimately how moved the wicked queen is by Pamela's contrasting vision of an ordered and moral cosmos (354-64). Similarly, the *Old Arcadia* ends with the trial of Pyrocles and Musidorus for treason and murder, the figurative interrogation of rhetoric that runs throughout the romance transforming into a series of literal judicial orations—all of which prove ineffective or morally problematic as the princes, faced with the consequences of their actions, cannot convince even a sympathetic audience to acquit

them. This failure leads to a guilty verdict which the text portrays as legally correct but as lacking in mercy and out of accord with the principle of equity. Taken altogether, both the *New* and *Old Arcadias* contain set pieces which represent rhetorical exchanges between socially unequal interlocutors as problematic. The distinctiveness of the peasants' suppression rests on the pressure the episode places on the Horatian ideal of the inseparability of poetics and eloquence, on a distinction created by the *Arcadia* at this juncture between fiction-making and oratory.

V: Conclusion—Poetry at a Crossroads

The *Arcadia's* portrayal of the peasants' suppression isn't a straightforward apology for or condemnation of mimesis. Sidney's tableau acknowledges the traditional criticisms leveled at the literary arts, but it strategically contains this critique within its unfavorable portrayals of oratory and naively mimetic painting. This moment reveals how Sidney solves the problem of how poetry functions, what it does, and how it differs from other arts and eloquences. Later poets indirectly inherit Sidney's fascination with using depictions of visual artwork as models for how poetry relates to the world. Yet unlike much of the later art it prefigures, Sidney's poetics make an unambiguously social intervention: his image-making explicitly mediates gendered and classed relations. The *Defence* alerts us to how Sidnean exemplarity functions, but the fallout around the peasants' uprising shows us how this exemplarity relates to the human community.

Sidney's solution to the problem of distinguishing poetry from other forms of eloquence would not last—not entirely, anyway. As poetry began to more fully emerge from rhetoric, it lost characteristics inherited from classical oratory while maintaining,

reemphasizing, and eventually strengthening its supposed autonomy from the real world, an autonomy which culminates in the now familiar interiority of lyric poetry throughout the nineteenth century. Ironically, this section of the *Arcadia*, fixated on demonstrating the superiority of poetry to rhetoric, paradoxically also points toward the now-forgotten relation of the sister arts and toward what one form of eloquence derives from the other. The conclusion to the peasants' revolt highlights elements Sidney appropriates from a tradition he at once belonged to and yet critiqued, a tradition which captivated him which he nevertheless interrogated. Sidney's understanding of poetry as a better form of exemplification is not, despite this ambivalence, a mere midway point between receding and emerging conceptions of poetics. It is a product of and a response to the crises of the Reformation, the European wars of religion, and a rapidly changing and unstable economic landscape, a situation which made the possibility of a form of communication capable of mediating between diverse speakers and audiences highly desirable. While it is unsurprising that elements of Sidney's solution, his fantasy about poetry's mediating efficacy, dissipated once the set of crises he responded to subsided or were resolved, to be replaced with different responses to different needs, it may be more salutary to think of Sidney's poetics, not as a halfway point to an already determined destination, a figure which uncritically privileges present over past formations, but as a highly significant crossroads, which taken in one direction leads to the present locale and environs, but which at one time held the possibility of leading in a number of different directions entirely.

VI: A Bridge: Rhetoric and Romance into the Future

Sidney never finished revising his romance, but the conclusion of the *Old Arcadia* sees the narrative's heroes and heroines rescued by the resurrection of Basilius, a once-bad ruler seemingly changed by his burial and rebirth: an appropriate ending, a final triumph of the golden world over oratory, with the failure of rhetoric redeemed through a convention of romance, a *topos* of fiction preserving what the *topoi* of rhetoric would have lost. This redemption of language in the *Arcadia* is not an outlier. I have been arguing that Sidney portrays poetry as efficacious and ethical by contrasting his own romance with the oratory it depicts. I now add that the *New Arcadia's* many representations of persuasion point toward the treatment of oratory in the other works studied in this dissertation.

My focus on romance and oratory is not arbitrary. Although (at least in Sidney's example) abstractly imitative of ideas or fore-conceits, romances make no claims toward realism, and as a genre, they *de facto* admit their own fictiveness, their status as *fabulae*, as works of poesy separate from the mundane world of the everyday. This is especially true of texts written after the witty and sophisticated subversions introduced into the genre by Ariosto and Boiardo a generation before Sidney composed the *Arcadia*. In *Orlando furioso*, especially, the mimesis of romance ceases to be conventionally imitative and becomes "redescriptive," as in Paul Ricoeur's understanding of the concept: a sequence of interpretive processes self-consciously situated in symbolic practices and discursive repertoires such as stories, myths, and *doxa*.⁷⁹ The justification offered by the authors studied in this dissertation, the argument that poetry addresses heterogeneous audiences ethically and efficaciously, is an ideological fantasy, but the expression of this

fantasy within romance significantly differentiates this figuration from apparently comparable symbolic constructions.

English romances following Ariosto—highly self-referential, often commenting on their own status as fiction—make use of the Tudor-Stuart imaginary like no other genre, but they usually do so interpretively, not passively, and this is nowhere more true than in second-order depictions of discourse, a category which includes representations of oratory. Unlike fiction, successful oratory does not call attention to its status as eloquence; the example of Gorgias and the sophists aside, theoreticians of persuasion from Aristotle to Cicero all recommend a style that imitates the way men and women naturally speak. The naked artificiality of romance, on the other hand, points to its own constructedness. Portrayals of oratory, embedded in such an auto-referential medium, de-naturalize discourse, calling attention both to the artificiality of *doxa* and to its containment in ideological frames of reference. Yet romance shares traditional rhetoric's investment in the social and the political. Despite its association with escapism, the genre's many fantastic elements, improbable plotlines, unexpected revelations, sudden reversals, wonder-inducing conventions, emblematic figures, and exotic locations and characters, place many demands on readers. Across mediums, whether in prose, in poetry, or on the stage, Renaissance romance used the fantastic to defamiliarize subject matters, creating a distancing effect which invites audiences to analyze what they read or see, and to relate fictional events and scenarios back to contemporary political and social concerns. All of the works discussed in this dissertation have in common the fact that they use fantasy as a way to portray difficult issues, not to avoid the historicity of the

problems they reference. At the same time, these texts all look at the world askew—they approach issues by reframing their immediate vantage point, by changing angles.

Defamiliarization depends upon recontextualization: either making something initially strange into something familiar, or, as in Shklovsky's original use of the term, presenting something familiar in a way that causes the viewer to see it anew. While Renaissance poetics did not have a term equivalent to "defamiliarization," it did possess the vocabulary of rhetorical decorum and interpretive accommodation, a set of hermeneutical strategies which frequently come very near this model of reading.⁸⁰ The moments I am interested in wrest accommodation from its original home in oratory, offering poetic fictions as the type of language most capable of adapting itself to, and in turn, drawing forth complex and ambivalent responses from, audiences.⁸¹

The subject of my next chapter, the conflict between Artegall and the Egalitarian Giant from Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*, resembles Pyrocles' confrontation with the rebelling peasants from the *Arcadia* in a number of respects. Both episodes portray a privileged speaker duplicitously lecturing lower-class rebels on the importance of hierarchy, and both narratives closely relate persuasive speech to violence. Spenser's verse differs from Sidney's prose, however, in the fact that Spenser is much more overtly concerned with interpretation than his precursor. Spenser not only dramatizes the consequences of speech between interlocutors of different social statuses, he shows the disastrous costs that accrue when orators and auditors fail to accommodate one another.

CHAPTER 2

“THE BETTER OF THE ARGUMENT”: ACCOMODATION, VIOLENCE, AND AUTHORITY IN BOOK FIVE OF *THE FAERIE QUEENE*

Early in the Second Canto of Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*, Artegall, the Knight of Justice, encounters “a mighty gyant” standing upon a rock, holding a “huge great paire of ballance in his hand” (30.1-3).⁸² Attracting a crowd by proposing an ambitious program of cosmological, geographical, and ultimately social, political, and economic reform, the Titan boasts that he will use his balance, a symbol of equity parodying and paralleling Artegall’s own patron, Astraea, to level all distinctions, or as the narrator memorably phrases it, to “reduce vnto equality” (V.ii.32.9). Artegall responds to the Giant’s provocative claims with a defense of order and hierarchy couched in biblical cadences and allusions, all delivered in the form of a ten-stanza long, classical oration. Despite the impressive oratorical display, this speech fails to have the effect intended by Artegall; the Giant responds to the oration but interprets it too literally. Prompted to weigh the unquantifiable elements encompassing ordered creation, he attempts to measure Artegall’s words, to weigh “the right or wrong,” using his balance to determine what “is false or else the true” (V.ii.44.6-7). Artegall continues, offering proofs showing the folly of titanic radicalism, culminating in an invitation to weigh singular truth against wrongness, the heft of verity against negation. The Giant again starts to reject these *exempla*, but before he can do so, Artegall’s traveling companion, Talus, takes the initiative: “He shouldered him from off the higher ground/ And down the rock him throwing, in the sea him drowned” (V.ii.49.8-9).

What can be made of this? The most obvious response is to see the Giant as modeling a bad reader, his inability to comprehend the figurative dimensions of

Artegall's rhetoric being analogous to an unfit exegete of *The Faerie Queene* itself. An old historicist reading, of course, might place the threat posed by the Giant within early modern challenges to the social order. Two-thirds of England's population, after all, lived in poverty at the time of the poem's composition, and the possibility of mass starvation ensured that lower-class rebellion menaced the imagination of elites throughout the late sixteenth century.⁸³ Only a year before Spenser published the second edition and second half of *The Faerie Queen*, food riots swept through London, South-East, and West, and continued to occur in East Anglia, West Country, and Kent throughout the next year and a half. The so-called "Oxfordshire Rising" of 1596, for example, took place when a small group of impoverished artisans tried to seize weapons and march on London in a much publicized but completely ineffectual attempt to foment rebellion.

Stephen Greenblatt notes that the Giant's eloquence resembles the narrator's in Book Five's proem but also claims that Talus' murder of the Giant "exorcizes the potentially dangerous social consequences — the praxis — that might follow from Spenser's own eloquent social criticism."⁸⁴ A more rhetorically conscious critic, Michael Dixon, also picks up on the similarity between Artegall's and the Giant's *topoi*, identifying the Giant's eloquence as a *refutatio* for Spenser's *inventio*. Using Spenser's own enthymemes, the Giant's eloquence simulates the objections of Spenser's opponents which are in turn countered by Artegall who retakes his proofs, forcing "the Giant to prove with his own instrument, that right and wrong cannot be weighed in balance: no quantity of wrong on one scale...will balance right on the other."⁸⁵ However convincing these readings are on their own terms, neither fully takes into account the nuances of the text, its complications, its messiness, its level of self-awareness. There are several

questions which these approaches, one historical, the other essentially formalist, fail to answer. Why, for instance, if Spenser wants the Giant's sudden death to foreclose the threat presented by his eloquence, is the Titan killed while disputing peacefully instead of engaging in a less symbolic mode of violence?⁸⁶ If Spenser wanted to present Artegall unambiguously, to merely affirm his status as the embodiment of justice, he could have easily invented a different scenario and used clearer arguments, less ambiguous proofs, to affect his readers.⁸⁷

Spenser, after all, had a variety of alogical and artificial proofs available for use in his project of fashioning a gentleman.⁸⁸ Proof through ethos, which I have been arguing is disrupted here, occurs by impressing readers with the performance or character of a virtue's advocate. Persuasion through pathos, a tactic dependent upon gaining the reader's consent by evoking emotion, also becomes problematized by this sudden violence. The third proof, logos, although usually thought of as deductive reasoning, includes demonstrative proofs, including *exempla* intended to support enthymematic assertions. Spenser persuades through logos insofar as he derives examples from history, scripture, and most obviously, *fabulae* — positive or negative models taken from fictional narratives. It seems intuitive to claim that Spenser's argument serves as his plot with its narrative sequence acting as this argument's *dispositio*. While this scheme coherently explains how persuasion works in *The Faerie Queene*, it fails to account for the elements presented here — ironically given this episode's explicit concern with persuasion. Yet the poem never unambiguously establishes the rhetorical affect of the competing speakers even as a matter of plot. While Dixon may be correct that Artegall gets the better of the Giant in their debate, on the literal level of *The Faerie Queene's* narrative, Artegall

confounds his enemy, but his proofs fail to convince a single auditor. The narrative defers the hostile reaction of the debate's audience, the response of the men and women who have gathered to hear the disputation, until after the Giant's murder.

This moment, I argue, places pressure on the moral and instrumental efficacy of communication and persuasion. *The Faerie Queene's* depiction of the conflict between Artegall and the Giant, this chapter shows, invites readers to contrast the Knight's argument with the accommodating and nuanced moral instruction offered by Spenser's poem, an instruction that, unlike Artegall's inefficacious and troubling oratory, exposes the conceptual and practical limitations of partial portrayals of justice, placing into relief the *nostos* of poetry against the domination of rhetoric.⁸⁹ Spenserian accommodation, the readerly counterpart to the principle of decorum — the concept whereby an orator or writer adapts genres, strategies, and styles for particular audiences and circumstances — encourages readers to “bring home” Book Five's discussion of justice, to adapt their own interpretation to make the text coherent and conceptually legible.⁹⁰ Yet Book Five never becomes a wholly open work.⁹¹ One of the points I make in this chapter is that *The Faerie Queene* leads its readers to a particular conclusion: while the poem represents the Giant as arguing for a dubious political program, it also portrays his claims about change and the decline of terrestrial justice as more accurate than Artegall's description of a hierarchical cosmos in a state of stasis — a set of affairs thoroughly contradicted both throughout the poem and in Spenser's unprinted but widely circulated dialogue, *A View of the State of Ireland*.

Because this set of claims touches on reader response to *The Faerie Queene*, the first section of this chapter examines the Spenserian archive, illustrating that Book Five's

Giant has traditionally been read in a variety of ways as different readers have pragmatically used Spenser's poem for their own purposes. Although interpretations of the Giant and Knight's conflict differ, sometimes radically, readers throughout the seventeenth century and beyond understood Spenser's poem through the twin practices of interpretive accommodation and poetic exemplarity. The second section of this chapter offers a close reading of the Second Canto of Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*, illustrating how this episode formally evokes this variety of responses while detailing what the poem models about communication and persuasion. Finally, this chapter concludes by suggesting that Spenser's support for colonialism in Ireland often takes the form of a critique of class relations, that *The Faerie Queene*'s depiction of Artegall's interaction and conflict with the Giant supports New English settlement in Ireland by attacking Irish, Old English, and even elements of domestic English social practice. Although a poor reader generally, the Giant correctly describes the influence of terrestrial mutability on institutions of justice. In the end, Spenser justifies the Tudor conquest of Ireland, but he renders this support equivocally.

Admittedly, this last part of my argument seems counterintuitive. Even recent discussions of Book Five tend to resemble Ciaran Brady's now thirty-five year-old claim that *The Faerie Queene*'s narrative simply acts as a vindication for the program expressed by Irenaeus in *A View of the State of Ireland*. Spenser, in this outlook, "not only defended the violent conduct of his former patron Lord Grey, but attempted, through the adventures of Artegall, and his iron-clad steward Talus, to provide the moral justification for the relentless use of force and terror."⁹² There have, of course, been voices of dissent.⁹³ Nevertheless, these perspectives on the poem, however persuasively

expressed by Annabel Patterson, Judith H. Anderson, and, most recently, Andrew Hadfield, remain relatively marginalized, usually offered as an “against-the-grain” interpretation available to modern readers, but not a viewpoint actually accessible from within the hodiernal circle of the author himself. As Hadfield laments, “Spenser is still often thought of as a slavishly sycophantic poet, read in terms of ancient critical orthodoxies, a representative of the old Renaissance of Arthur Lovejoy, where each knew his or her place in a rigidly stratified hierarchy: it is a model of belief that no other writer is assumed to share any more.”⁹⁴ Yet even Hadfield, one of the most persuasive readers of this episode elsewhere, in his recent and comprehensive biography of Spenser, straightforwardly equates Artegall with Lord Grey, engaging in a surprising fit of literalism in assuming a simple identification between a historical and allegorical figure.⁹⁵ The ambiguity of the Knight’s conflict with the Giant, however, resists attempts to pigeonhole its representation of Artegall as an endorsement of Spenser’s patron, even if it is clear that there are a number of moments in Book Five which shadow both Lord Grey’s bloody campaign during the Second Desmond Rebellion and this conflict’s troubled reception in the English court. The Knight of Justice simply has more semiotic ambiguity than equating him with Lord Grey acknowledges.⁹⁶

Examining how Spenser manipulates interpretive accommodation avoids literalism while still accounting for the political resonances postcolonial critics and new historicists have located, hopefully in the process bridging formal and cultural approaches to reading *The Faerie Queene*.⁹⁷ More still, locating the argument between Giant and Knight within a tradition of interpretation which initially arose from analyzing and critiquing forensic oratory can show how Spenser creates authority for his description of

the Irish crisis elsewhere in the poem.⁹⁸ After all, the encounter between Artegall and the Giant raises the question of who legitimately possesses the authority to forensically determine the just and equitable. This section of the poem resembles a trial, positioning readers to act as a kind of judge both for Artegall and the Titan.⁹⁹ This positioning, however, frames the eloquence of *The Faerie Queene* as superior, more capable of representing political and religious problems for its audience's discernment than the forms of eloquence it enacts and critiques. In performing the role of the seemingly benevolent, apparently neutral observer of a morally complex argument and conflict, *The Faerie Queene* establishes an ethos as a reliable source for explaining and accounting for the sections of the poem explicitly concerned with the colonial project. This part of Book Five, then, has an ideological and rhetorical function very similar to the display of justice in "the real world." Just as the appearance of an apparently impartial trial grants legitimacy to the state, the appearance of a sophisticated and complexly rendered representation of problematic justice lends authority to Spenser's poem. In this case, a critique of one kind of discourse, institutional-supporting oratory, legitimizes another form of discourse, the poem's representation and description of the situation in Ireland along with the greater geopolitical conflict between Catholic Spain and Protestant England in which Spenser situates his colonial intervention.

Although the dialogue remains a key source, one that I refer to throughout this chapter, I want to avoid repeating interpretations that see Book Five of *The Faerie Queene* as an extension of *A View of the State of Ireland*. At the same time, I am also dissatisfied with explanations that fall back on the canard of meaning in the poem always culminating in an aporia, a capitulation which fails to account for the complicated affects

the poem generates in readers. What I think is needed is an approach that mediates between ideological critique and a rhetorical reading which attempts to gauge and explicate the response this episode generates in its audience.¹⁰⁰ As such, this chapter is not a direct analysis of Spenser's representation of class relations, but rather an examination of how he constructs the poetic sphere — a location posited as valuable because it acts as a site of fruitful and non-coercive persuasion between speakers and audiences of different social statuses.¹⁰¹ Canto Two of Book Five of *The Faerie Queene* portrays justice as a concept that is socially constructed, functioning to legitimize forces that are already socially hegemonic. The question becomes whether this is a liberatory gesture or a move toward naturalizing a system in which power creates truth.

I: Accommodating Readers and the Spenserian Archive

Both because of its complex history and ubiquity throughout the Renaissance, accommodation is easier to demonstrate than define. As a consequence, aside from better illustrating what I mean when I refer to the hermeneutical practice, examining the records left by *The Faerie Queene*'s earliest readers serves as the simplest way to show how Spenserian poetics relies on adaption. Many of the examples in this section go far afield, but I highlight them to call attention to two forms of readerly practice relevant in Artegall's conflict with the Giant: interpretation as extending meaning to increase a text's utility via interactions with examples; and the adaption of making something initially strange into something familiar and useful. Even a quick and partial glimpse at Spenser's reception history reveals how variously *The Faerie Queene* has been interpreted and used by different parties with diverse purposes and agendas; stated differently, Spenser's

romance drags a long trail of accommodating interpretations. Significantly, this seeming pliability depends on the relationship between readers and narrative example. The nearly ubiquitous identification of textual *exempla* throughout the Renaissance was not seen as indistinguishable from accommodation, but the two habits were, at least in practice, inseparable; early modern readers figured each mode as a form of readerly participation, an interaction which made a text useful without committing violence against the spirit intended by its author.

For an example, I need only turn to one of the most famous portions of the Spenserian archive, a 1617 edition of the poet's works owned by Carew Raleigh, Sir Walter's son, featuring extensive marginalia attributed to Elizabeth Throckmorton Raleigh, Sir Walter's widow and Carew's mother.¹⁰² Unlike the other readers mentioned in this section, Elizabeth did not annotate the debate between Artegall and the Giant, but I begin with her here as an illustration of the practice of following examples throughout a fictional narrative. Elizabeth scrawled the names of family and acquaintances throughout the book's margins next to Spenser's characters, making personal associations between her life and *The Faerie Queene*'s narrative, seemingly connecting her late husband and herself to figures from the long-deceased poet's writing.¹⁰³ The very specificity of these notes, and their frequent disconnect from historical actuality, have troubled literary historians.¹⁰⁴ Certainly many of her "identifications" are more plausible than others. Elizabeth links Timeas to her late husband; Serena with herself; but she also claims to be Colin's mistress in *Colin Clouts come home againe*, a character which, as Andrew Hadfield points out, the poem "later reveals is Rosalind, a figure of Spenser's wife."¹⁰⁵ In Book Six of *The Faerie Queene*, Elizabeth sensibly identifies Colin Clout with the

poet, but also links Calidore with Sir Walter.¹⁰⁶ With some justification, Andrew Zurcher notes that Elizabeth “made a number of annotations, the most interesting of which are interesting because they are so uninteresting.”¹⁰⁷ As the issue is usually seen, the significance of this copy of the 1617 folio lies in the fact that it reminds us of how invested Spenser’s contemporaries were in sussing out the topical allusions behind the poet’s allegory. It seems that discovering who shadowed what was so tempting that readers evidently reached dubious and implausible conclusions, interpretations totally unsustainable when pressed by any halfway careful interrogation.

I want to stress two qualifications about this marginalia, however, that are frequently overlooked in the critical conversation about this famous case study. Firstly, relating *fabulae* to one’s personal life was a common reading practice throughout the period. Readers were expected to extrapolate moral precepts from fictional stories, and these precepts were intended to be applied to specific situations, just as an orator invited audiences to compare *fabulae* to events from court cases.¹⁰⁸ Authors, critics, publishers, anyone involved with books at all, commonly assumed that readers would adapt lessons from fables and allegories for moral and personal uses within their daily lives. In the Renaissance, men and women read stories for practical and ethical purposes as well as for entertainment.

Secondly, Elizabeth Throckmorton Raleigh’s identifications are potentially more sophisticated than are generally presumed. Her ascriptions are, I want to suggest, not necessarily literal confusions between historical and fictional characters. Consider, for example, the note recognizing Calidore as Sir Walter Raleigh. In this particular instance, Oakshott defends the note’s historical veracity, observing that “a plausible case can be

made for the identification: particularly in light of Raleigh's withdrawal from court."¹⁰⁹ Against this, it can be objected that there are also a great many aspects of Calidore's emplotment that do not align with Walter Raleigh's life in any fashion whatsoever, and contra some modern critics, Elizabeth was almost certainly not so disconnected from her husband's affairs (and from reality) to assume that Book Six of *The Faerie Queene* was *about* her late husband, although she plainly understood that parts of the poem *concerned* or *alluded* to him. In fact, the marking in Carew Raleigh's text merely places the initials "S^r.W.R." next to the name "Calidore."¹¹⁰ This scrawling in no way signifies how the two figures are related or whether the connection is one Elizabeth is inferring from the book's content or one she is making for her own potentially idiosyncratic purposes. Likewise, simply because Elizabeth Raleigh made identifications between herself and virtuous female personages from Spenser's work does not necessarily imply she mistakenly believed she was *the* model for these characters. The annotations in pencil, particularly the traditional pointing-hand marks (manicules) ascribed by Oakshott to Elizabeth found next to passages concerned with Belphebe and Florimell, show that she followed these characters throughout *The Faerie Queene*'s complex and winding narrative — not that she mistook them as ciphers for her own person. Rather than assuming the characters were modeled *after* her, she may have thought they were useful models *for* her.¹¹¹ Far from displaying Elizabeth Raleigh's ignorance, her annotations demonstrate one way in which *The Faerie Queene*'s author intended his epic to be read.

That Spenser understood his poetry would be viewed in this fashion is implied both in his "Letter to Raleigh" and in *A View of the State of Ireland*. Discussing the role of bards in Irish culture, Eudoxus notes that poets have a "speciall reputation, and that (me

thinks) not without great cause; for...they have always used to set forth the praises of the good and vertuous, and to beate down and disgrace the bad and the vitious” in order to stir listeners “up to affect the like commendations.” For his part, Irenaeus agrees, praising authors who “labour to better the manners of men, and thorough the sweete baite of their numbers...steale into...young spirits a desire of honour and vertue,” but he objects that the bards accomplish the opposite of this Horatian principle because they present the wicked, not the good, as models to be emulated.¹¹² Although it is impossible to fully ascertain in this instance, it would not at all be surprising if a female reader was interested in locating female *exempla*. Elizabeth Throckmorton Raleigh almost certainly was not deriving her reading habits from Isocrates or Cicero, from ancient manuals on the interpretation of forensic oratory, from early-modern paraphrases of Saint Augustine’s biblical hermeneutics, from Erasmus’ many discussions of the subject, or from whatever learned and famous source I could name here, but she *was* reading Spenser in a tradition that very much descended from these milieus. Like most educated readers during the Renaissance, she read rhetorically, which is to say she adapted *The Faerie Queene* for her own purposes. In this sense, at least, she was indeed a typical reader for her time and place.

My next example, although it directly concerns Artegall’s conflict with the Giant, is not quite as exemplary as the Raleigh marginalia. At the very least, I would argue that Elizabeth Throckmorton’s use of Spenser did less violence to *The Faerie Queene* than a simple excerption made by an anonymous propagandist who republished Artegall’s confrontation with the Egalitarian Giant in a 1648 pamphlet entitled *The Faerie Leveller*.¹¹³ Printed at the height of the Second English Civil War, the pamphlet’s

Royalist editor appropriates Spenser's work, casting the Elizabethan poet as a prophet predicting Charles I's forthcoming and inevitable defeat of the tyrannical and Titan-like Oliver Cromwell. A "key" to Spenser's epic prints the names of Book Five's characters in italics. Next to Spenser's characters, printed in contrasting roman type, lies their Civil War-Era analogue. This key flattens Spenser's text, avoiding ambiguity by outright informing readers that "*Arthegall Prince of Justice*" is "King Charles"; "*Talus his Executioner with his Yron flave. The Kings forces*"; "*The Gyant Leveller. Col. Oliver Cromwell.*"¹¹⁴

This dubious appropriation accomplishes a number of effects, some readily apparent, others that get to the heart of how literary exegesis is influenced by historical contingency. One obvious benefit of linking *The Faerie Queene* with Royalist victory is that it allows the editor to assume Spenser's laurels as a great poet for Charles I's cause. The King's defeat of Cromwell is "graphically described by the Prince of English Poets *Edmund Spenser*, whose verses then propheticall are now become historicall in our dayes."¹¹⁵ Drawn by the sympathy of one paragon for another, the prince of poetry comes to the defense of an actual prince. Apart from its conscription of Spenser, the text makes a relatively precise threefold argument. First of all, *The Faerie Leveller* raises Royalist spirits by framing Spenser's poem as prognosticating the King's victory over the rebelling Roundheads. Secondly, the editor subsumes Artegall's dazzling though problematic defense of hierarchy for the Royalist cause. And finally and most importantly, this pamphlet not only connects Cromwell to Spenser's communist Giant, it actually links the King's enemy to the historically existing Levellers, the famous political movement that endorsed popular sovereignty, suffrage, and equality before the law.¹¹⁶

Cromwell, of course, opposed the Levellers, famously executing mutineers connected to the movement in May 1649, as well as imprisoning several Leveller leaders in the Tower of London (admittedly, these acts of suppression largely took place after *The Faerie Leveller's* publication). Nevertheless, this pamphlet gamely attempts to implicate Cromwell by tying him to radical factions within the New Model Army, regardless of the military leader's actual attitude to popular democracy. Both this publication's reading of Spenser and its insinuations about Cromwell stretch credulity; facing a string of defeats throughout 1648, it is doubtful *The Faerie Leveller* served as a particularly effective boost for Royalist morale. The pamphlet is nevertheless worthy of note because it reflects seventeenth-century readers' willingness to adapt Spenser for political purposes, even if its appropriation of *The Faerie Queene* violates the dictum against uncharitable distortion.

In any case, applying Spenser for political ends was not confined to Royalists; Parliamentary propagandists also enlisted Book Five's *topoi* for their cause. Oliver Cromwell himself admired Spenser so greatly he recommended returning the Kilcolman estate to the poet's grandson, citing, in part, the author of *The Faerie Queene's* "eminent deserts and services to the Commonwealth" as justifications for this recommendation.¹¹⁷ The republican who engaged most thoroughly with Spenser's *topoi* of justice and virtue, however, was John Milton. In his *Areopagitica*, the later poet directly invoked his sixteenth-century predecessor to defend the role played by the freedom of the press in shaping a reader's virtue:

He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised, unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks

out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather: that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure; her whiteness is but an excremental whiteness; which was the reason why our sage and serious poet Spenser, whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas, describing true temperance under the person of Guyon, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon, and the bower of earthly bliss that he might see and know, and yet abstain.¹¹⁸

Milton does not directly refer to accommodation in describing how Spenser's poetry arms "warfaring" Christians with the experience necessary to confront evil, but his vocabulary and metaphors strongly suggest that he is referring to this interpretative theory. Milton advocates for a reader who can "apprehend" and "consider" the differences between vices and virtues and also "distinguish" and "prefer" the better. He figures reading as a form of travel, as a competitive race, as a trial, and — through his description of Guyon's adventure in the Bower of Bliss — as a kind of homecoming in which the reader begins in a state of "blank" virtue, an "excremental whiteness," only to leave this ersatz innocence to confront temptation in order to return to a virtue newly strengthened by experience. Although she does not use the Greek term, Kathy Eden has shown that reading as *nostos*, the returning home from a long journey, was among the earliest metaphors in the tradition of *interpretatio scripti*, one that was thoroughly carried over into Christian humanism.¹¹⁹

Like the author of *The Faerie Leveller*, Milton's discussion of Spenser is significant because it details how early modern readers saw adaption functioning in the relationship between literary texts and their audiences. More still, Milton's commentary highlights the social dimensions of accommodation. According to Erasmus, to be an accommodating reader was to read something sympathetically, attempting to understand

a text's spirit without distorting its meaning with evil intentions. But accommodation also had ethical valences in addition to being a theory of reading.¹²⁰ Going far beyond stylistic formalism, the interpretation of rhetoric was thought to promote important values such as equity and prudence, an emphasis that increased as rhetorical theory came to inform first the interpretation of scripture and then became a guiding ethos for the interpretation of all forms of eloquence. Erasmus' ideal is a form of irenic tolerance in which men and women adapt themselves — their words, their actions — to each other and their circumstances.¹²¹ Accommodation as an interpretive act, however, becomes an interdependent act of reading intended to “bring into one and the same household” and make a text “feel like one of the family,” what Robert Stillman summarizes as becoming “at home in the world of a fiction.”¹²² Readers, in this theory of interpretation, “reconstruct the conceptual design” of “a fictional landscape in order to profit.”¹²³ They also adapt a text to suit their own needs. As an act of discovery, accommodation becomes the readerly counterpart to *inventio*.

Despite their political differences, Milton's commentary can help contextualize *The Faerie Leveller's* intervention. The pamphlet could never be accused of seriously attempting to reconstruct Spenser's conceptual design, but it *does* adapt the text for its own purposes and profit. And while its claim about Spenser's “prophetic” authorial intent is certainly suspect, the publication does ostensibly make an argument about how readers should interpret the poem's meaning. Unlike Milton, the pamphlet's editor is not self-consciously locating his perspective in a humanist and Protestant milieu of scriptural interpretation, but his vocabulary, along with his emphasis on practical utility and profit, evidences how securely this use of Book Five exists within a tradition of reading

practices developed alongside a rhetorical hermeneutics. The pamphlet's editor even directly entices by promising that Spenser's allegory has been "culled out by it selfe, and set forth for present use," an evocation of visual efficacy familiar from the *ut pictura poesis* tradition.¹²⁴

Milton, too, makes "present use" of Spenser's allegory. Reversing the stance taken by the editor of *The Faerie Leveller*, his *Eikonoklastes* adapts Book Five's arguments against King Charles, casting the monarch as a tyrant rebelling against God's law, akin, in a sense, to the Egalitarian Giant.¹²⁵ Faced with the recently executed King's crimes, Milton longs for an easy solution that punishes the monarch without implicating Parliament in his death; he desires "a man of iron, such as *Talus*, by our Poet *Spencer*...fain'd to be the page of Justice, who with his iron flaile could doe all this, and expeditiously, without those deceitful formes and circumstances of Law, worse then ceremonies in Religion."¹²⁶ Milton indirectly wishes Parliament had the distance Talus gives to Artegall in enforcing laws; he acknowledges the "deceitful formes and circumstances of Law" used in executing the King, but insists on their necessity because mediating figures like Talus simply do not exist outside of fiction: if they did, "I say God send it down, whether by one *Talus* or a thousand."¹²⁷ Milton's implication, of course, is that the Giant's execution is also an evil — but a necessary one, like the deceptions and violence practiced by the Parliamentarians.¹²⁸ Unlike *The Faerie Leveller*, *Eikonoklastes* borrows *The Faerie Queene*'s invention without obviously warping the poem's design; as King points out, "his generalized application of the text resists the extreme topicality of the Royalist interpretation."¹²⁹ And as I will show in the next two parts of this chapter, Milton correctly identifies the need to ameliorate the pangs of necessary but "deceitful

formes and circumstances of Law,” as being of paramount concern throughout the confrontation between Artegall and the Giant. Milton is both a better rhetorician and a better expositor of rhetoric than the editor of *The Faerie Leveller*, but both *Eikonoklastes* and the Royalist pamphlet exist on the same spectrum of readerly engagement: the works of both propagandists illustrate that the *inventio* of Spenser’s Allegory of Justice, including Artegall’s debate and conflict with the Giant, were a site of contention for early readers.¹³⁰

Unsurprisingly, the episode’s implications remained disputed well into the nineteenth century and beyond. In particular, the Giant was a favorite subject for several of the canonical poets associated with English romanticism.¹³¹ William Wordsworth, having rejected the ardent radicalism of his youth in favor of a wary conservatism, could adopt a paraphrase of Artegall’s warning to the Giant as a personal motto: “Perilous is sweeping change, all chance unsound.”¹³² Radicals, predictably, differed from Wordsworth in embracing the murdered Titan. In a copy of *The Faerie Queene* he was annotating for Fanny Brawne shortly before his death, John Keats composed an alternate ending for the defeated Giant. After the Titan is murdered by Talus, a sage, “Typographus,” refits the Giant’s shattered and broken body, “And made him read in many a learned book.” Emancipated and refined through the power of print, the newly empowered Giant again confronts Artegall and Talus: “The one he struck stone-blind, the other’s eyes wox dim.”¹³³ Thomas Love Peacock reports that Percy Shelley went further than even Keats by claiming that “the Giant has the better of the argument; Artegall’s iron man knocks him over into the sea and drowns him. This is the usual way that power deals with opinion.” When Peacock protested to Shelley that this was not the lesson

Spenser meant to impart, the poet replied, “Perhaps not...it is the lesson which he conveys to me. I am of the Giant’s faction.”¹³⁴

As Peacock’s objection illustrates, Wordsworth’s reading of the poem, the identification between Artegall’s argument with Spenser’s, had long since become the accepted interpretation of the episode. Shelley admits that while the text generated a particular response in him as a reader, this affect was independent of the design of *The Faerie Queene* itself. Shelley and Keats, in short, saw themselves as reading against the grain. However much they sympathized with Spenser’s Giant over his Knight, neither poet located this sympathy in the poem’s conception or in its author’s intention. Yet as *The Faerie Leveller* and Milton show, readers have both wrestled with and struggled to control the significance of this depiction of eloquence and violence practically from the second half of *The Faerie Queene*’s publication. Audiences freely adapted Spenser to make sense of his allegory and to make his poem personally and politically valuable. The text is, I think, constructed in order to be read in this way. Allegory, despite its modern reputation for narrow pedantry and straightforward messaging, invites this kind of interpretive supposition. In Greek, *allegoria* translates to “other speaking,” and the mode requires audiences to bridge the gap between what is expressed and what is intended.¹³⁵ Although he is writing about Philip Sidney, Robert Stillman’s observations about allegory in the *Arcadia* are applicable to *The Faerie Queene*: “allegory’s enstrangement of familiar words...is enabled by a complimentary enstrangement of familiar narrative patterns. The strangeness of allegory depends...on the narrative’s persistent violation of our familiar sense of time, place, and the casual connections that traditionally link one part of the story to another.”¹³⁶ As a trope, this “other speaking” depends upon audiences

actively participating in making something out of all these discontinuities.

Artegall's encounter with the Giant compounds this strangeness through its repeated violations of genre and readerly expectations. Not only does this section of Book Five not make literal sense, it fails spectacularly to resolve itself in a way that satisfies audience anticipations based upon the heroic conventions of romance as a form.¹³⁷ This conceptual rupture attracts scrutiny, even suspicion; it calls for a much greater interpretive investment than most narratives. Attempting to make Spenser's text cohere, to make its strangeness into something familiar, necessitates looking closely at the seams holding together both Artegall and the Giant's eloquence. Shelley disassociated the affect created by this episode from Spenser's intentions, but I will argue that the response generated in Spenser's nineteenth-century successor (and many other readers besides) has as much to do with the poem's own mode of persuasion as it does with any previously existing sympathy with "the Giant's faction." The literal-minded Giant is the very antithesis of the accommodating reader. He is a negative *exemplum*, one which demonstrates how to read *The Faerie Queene* by modeling how *not* to read the poem. Artegall himself directly points to the Giant's inability to read accommodatingly when he warns, "of words, the which be spoken, / The eare must be the balance to decree / And iudge, whether with truth or falsehood they agree" (V.ii.47.7-9). Yet the Giant does have "the better of the argument," at least in the sense that his account of cosmic disorder in an unjust world and an imperfect political settlement closely approximates the description of the state of justice described elsewhere in Book Five. Shelley's point about power's role in dealing with "opinion" is also apropos; this episode foregrounds the relationship between force and truth. While Spenser's attitude toward policing discourse may differ

from Shelly's, and even from Milton's, the Elizabethan poet nevertheless highlights the connection between the *topoi* of justice and suppression, just as the later poets suggest. In foregrounding the connection between power and persuasion in this way, Spenser establishes his own ethos as a decorous poet, as a creator of a discourse capable of telling "hard truths" about language and justice without inflicting violence — the subject his poetry analyzes — on his audience. The next section of this chapter fleshes out how Spenser accomplishes this.

II: Spenser's Portrayal of Rhetoric

As I suggested in my introduction to this chapter, far from bolstering Artegall's status as an agent of justice, the Knight's conflict with the Egalitarian Giant undermines both his authority and the authority of Book Five's narrator, in the process removing the evaluative prerogative from something located in the oratorical contest's audience and reinscribing this privileged space within the readership of the greater poem itself. By and large, *The Faerie Queene* achieves this affect by distancing its reader from its narrative voice, an estrangement reflected in the similarities between the Proem's and the Giant's arguments. The majority of Book Five's commentators have noticed these similarities, but have explained the issue away by asserting that the episode is actually about the difficulty in distinguishing between Artegall's "authentic" quest to restore justice and the Giant's somehow less ontologically justified plans for social and cosmic reform.¹³⁸ Yet, putting the motivation of each actor aside for the moment, Artegall's vision of cosmic stasis, his assertion that justice on earth mirrors and flows from the unchanging, unerring "haeuenly justice" of the Ptolemaic universe, is plainly untrue. If it *were* true, there

would be no need for Artegall to restore Astraea's reign in the first place. While *The Faerie Queene's* interrogation of justice frequently draws upon a neo-platonic framework of virtues having ideal forms to compare their earthly embodiments with,¹³⁹ the poem does not represent existing social relations accurately reflecting or carrying out these otherworldly models. Contrary to what the Knight argues before the Giant and his audience, *The Faerie Queene* depicts both justice and human relationships as socially produced, malleable, and subject to change. This gulf between Artegall's claims and the poem's portrayal is unlikely to be a continuity error on Spenser's part, unlikely to be a neglectful lapse made in the service of achieving a particular affect or allegorical argument: the restoration of a fallen terrestrial justice, after all, is the *raison d'être* of Artegall's quest in Book Five.

With the conceptualization of justice already out of balance, the initial problem presented by the Giant's claims and the secondary problem created by his murder draw a response that acts as a dark warning to *The Faerie Queene's* readers, an illustration of the dangers of argument between socially unequal interlocutors, a demonstration almost crudely underscored by the terrible fate of the Giant's hapless audience. As I brought up in my introduction, this unfortunate collection of auditors, perhaps surprisingly, remains silent throughout the whole affair, neither commenting on the Giant's nor the Knight's claims, only reacting after the Giant is murdered, at that moment collectively responding in defense of their executed champion only to be themselves routed in a disquieting bit of crowd control. Talus, again acting as a surrogate for Artegall, uses his flail to repel the multitude: "He like a swarme of flyes them ouerthrew" (5.ii.53.6). The narrator insists on the imminent danger the crowd poses, but this simile reduces the audience to insects,

undercutting their threat and reinforcing how strongly the power dynamic favors the Knight and his servant. In a surprising reversal, Talus assumes gigantic proportions while the titanic radicalism of the Giant's outraged followers becomes diminutive, even threatened. The Giant is an unaccommodating reader, but Artegall is equally titanic: an indecorous speaker unwilling to adapt himself, a Giant swatting insects who prefers to use hard and soft force instead of genuine persuasion.

Despite this reversal's moral complexity, throughout both the debate and the battle that follows, the narrator rigidly insists on the rightness of Artegall's action and the wickedness of his enemies, explicitly stating of the Giant that "it was not the right, which he did seek; / But rather stroue extremities to way, / Th'one to diminish, th'other for to eek" (V.ii.49.1-3). Yet, contra the narrator, the Giant seems authentically puzzled by Artegall's claims. By weighing the Knight of Justice's commitments on his balance, the reformer attempts to judge the ideals he opposes by the standards of his own titanic radicalism, but he is nevertheless sincerely evaluating them.¹⁴⁰ More still, the Giant's own claims rest on his belief that "Th'one to diminish, th'other for to eek" is precisely the "right" course of action: the giant, after all, is convinced that his project of social and cosmological reform is a just program. Rather than dismantling the logic behind the Giant's radicalism, the narrator's condemnation rests on a common tautology: the Giant's claims are wrong because the Giant's claims are wrong.¹⁴¹ Likewise, the narrator frames the reaction of the debate's audience upon seeing the Giant's "sudden desolation" as deriving from lawlessness and moral turpitude. But these attempts to frame and determine reader response are so clumsy that the distance between what is represented and how it is described again becomes ironic, as was earlier true in regards to the

situational and generic inappropriateness of the Giant's murder. The narrator repeatedly undermines his own authority by revealing his complicity in framing events.¹⁴² While the narrator's attempts to shape the perspective of *The Faerie Queene's* readers do not necessarily create sympathy for the Giant and his audience, the contradictions raised by these attempts complicate the episode — and raise the uncomfortable possibility that the narrator's audience, too, could fall victim to this blurring of persuasion and violence, that the routed audience's relationship with the Knight could serve as an analogue for the relationship between *The Faerie Queene's* speaker and its interpreters.

These heavy-handed manipulations gesture toward paralleling and reinforcing the effects of Artegall's oratory, but as the episode progresses, the text's many exposed faultlines render the commentator's eloquence ineffective. Like the oratory the poem portrays, these intrusions would be coercive if the distance between the speaker's commentary and the action it describes did not allow readers to disassociate themselves from its perspective.¹⁴³ In place of influencing readers, this simulacrum of narrative contributes to the episode's foregrounding of the connections between bad-faith persuasion and violence, making it clear that an unwillingness to accommodate links the two auditors to the narrator. Seen from this vantage point, one plausible explanation for why both Artegall and his opponent are presented so ambiguously is because, like the narrator before the poem's audience, neither speaker seriously attempts to persuade the other at all. Each speaker limits his proofs to arguments drawn from the same unconvincing sources: authority supported by the threat of violence. This whole episode is structured around a series of doublings and a blurring between, on one side, Artegall and a narrator that, according to Harry Berger, "provides readers with a virtual or fictive

depiction of discourse, one that the poem actively represents and subtly criticizes,”¹⁴⁴ and, on the other side, a Giant whose arguments *The Faerie Queene* encourages its readers to view suspiciously. Apart from these doublings, the most significant mechanism by which Spenser implicates Book Five’s protagonist are the reversals I have been tracing since this chapter’s introduction, reversals which see the Egalitarian Giant growing more and more diminutive while Artegall and Talus become more and more Giant-like. The Giant and Knight become mirrors of one another as they interact. The final reversal, in which a now giant-like Talus swats his increasingly insect-like opponents, only completes a transfer that has been operating below the text’s surface throughout the duration of the conflict.

Yet the literal monstrosity, the titanic proportions of the Egalitarian Giant, are never definitively established at all. When Knight and squire first encounter their opponent, he is standing “vpon a rocke, and holding forth on hie” (V.ii.30.2), suggesting the possibility that the so-called “Giant” is short enough to need to stand upon an object in order to be seen by the crowd he is addressing. This is confirmed when Talus shoulders him from the cliff. The poem tells us that Talus approached “nigh unto him cheeke by cheeke” (V.ii.49.7), with the clear implication being that the squire and Giant are roughly the same height. This contradiction raises two mutually compatible possibilities. The first is that this is a moment in which Spenser exposes an inconsistency or impossibility to his readers in order to invite them to look past the literal meaning of his poem’s content and to its status as allegory: the traditional function of an accommodating reader when confronted with the trope. The second (related) possibility is that the designation of Artegall’s opponent as a giant is an imposition on the narrator’s

part, a prejudiced designation not necessarily supported by the poem itself, a hostile act of naming which attempts to situate the leveler's threat to the social order within a long history of classical and biblical traditions which associate giants with tyranny — in this case, the tyranny of the multitude.¹⁴⁵ The narrator's designation frames the Giant's action as monstrous, unnatural, and tyrannical, but the poem again and again cuts away at the distinction between the radical's interest in social justice and Artegall's ostensibly more natural attempt to bring the long-departed Astraea back from her retreat amidst the stars.

Structurally, the initial resemblance between the Giant's claims and the Proem's description of Astraea's departure prepares readers to notice the similarities between Artegall and his opponent. According to the Giant, social relations in the golden age represent the original, correct order of things, and current social, political, and economic inequalities are inherently unnatural degenerations from this primal state. Although adapted to justify radical ends, these are exactly the same *topoi* invoked in the Proem, even if the narrator locates the problem around an erosion of justice on earth while the Giant focuses his complaints on the establishment of unnatural hierarchies.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, both arguments, the Giant's and the Knight's, are similarly derived from tradition which they each support solely with the threat of force. Judith H. Anderson has described Artegall's arguments, his collage of biblical testimonies and proverbial wisdom, as "frozen statements," "words in ritual having little explanatory power."¹⁴⁷ Like the Giant's references to the tradition of the golden age, his claims are rooted in the ritualistic repetition of culturally sanctified narratives about the past. Conversely, while Artegall's arguments have no *persuasive* power, unlike the Giant, he certainly has the *physical* and *institutional* strength necessary to enforce his account of history.

At this point, it is worth noting that a sophisticated and lengthy discussion of justice found in *A View of the State of Ireland* refuses to figure society as unchanging and imposed by celestial edict. As it is characterized in Spenser's dialogue, the state of affairs in Tudor-occupied Ireland resembles the description made by *The Faerie Queene's* narrator and the Egalitarian Giant, not Artegall's *inventio* of a frozen commonwealth. Irenaeus observes that, although laws were initially ministered to a nation for its benefit in the same way a doctor gives medicine to a patient:

neverthelesse we often see, that either thorough ignorance of the disease, or through unreasonablenesse of the time, or other accidents comming betweene, in stead of good, it worketh hurt, and, out of one evill, throweth the patient into many miseries. So the laws were at first intended for the reformation of abuses, and peaceable continuance of the subject; but are sithence either disannulled, or quite prevaricated thorough change and alteration of times, yet they are good still in themselves; but, in that commonwealth which is ruled by them, they worke not that good which they should, and sometimes also that evill which they would not.¹⁴⁸

Laws, according to Irenaeus, are subject to corruption, and their effectiveness is contingent upon the historical conditions from which they were created. Adding to this, the goodness of a law is situational, the socially constructed product of a particular time and place. Divorced from its context, a law makes no sense and can potentially serve as an obstacle toward good governance. The connections to forensic oratory, and to decorum and accommodation, are palpably obvious.

Contradicting its conservative reputation, *A View of the State of Ireland* advocates particular social and legal reforms, and Irenaeus' voice often very much resembles the Giant's. He critiques Brehon law, for instance, as designed specifically "for the defence and maintenance of their [the Irish] lands in their posteritie, and for excluding all innovation or alienation thereof unto strangers, and specially to the English."¹⁴⁹ Irenaeus

even extends his critique to the island's social structure: "they reserved their titles, tenures, and seignories whole and sound to themselves, and for proof alledge, that they have ever sithence remained to them untouched, so as now to alter them, should, (say they) be a great wrong."¹⁵⁰ Irenaeus' other contention about Irish law is even more Giant-like: he objects because it favors the titled and propertied Irish while exploiting the poor and marginalized. As Eudoxus summarizes his friend's position, the Irish upperclasses "delight...to leane to their old customes and Brehon lawes, though they be more unjust and also more inconvenient for the common people."¹⁵¹ One might expect that *A View of the State of Ireland* codifies Irish law as unnatural and exploitive while endorsing English law, but to the shock of Eudoxus, Irenaeus explicitly denies this possibility, observing that "not only the common law, but the Statutes and Actes of Parliament" are completely inappropriate for Ireland: "For lawes ought to be fashioned unto the manners and conditions of the people, to whom they are meant, and not to be imposed on them according to the simple rule of right."¹⁵² English law may suit the conditions of England, but it, too, is unnatural, and its effectiveness merely corresponds to its suitability for the particular social conditions it was written under.

Ironically, Artegall's arguments against his opponent are largely opposed to *A View of the State of Ireland's* conclusions. Even the Knight's famous dictum, "All change is perillous, and all chaunce vnsound" (V.ii.36.7), is echoed in *A View*, yet not by Spenser's spokesman, but by Eudoxus, who nearly repeats Artegall's retort by stating that "all innovation is perillous." Irenaeus, however, the more authoritative speaker within the dialogue, strongly refutes this notion, asserting that this only holds true "where the affaires stand in such sort, as they may continue in quietness, or be assured at all to abide

as they are. But in the realme of Ireland we see much otherwise.”¹⁵³ The increasingly murky allegoric topography Artegall traverses can hardly be described as quiet, peaceful, and likely to carry on as such. By the standards of Irenaeus, the situation described by *The Faerie Queene* calls for some kind of reform, even if we elect to preclude the radical solutions proposed by the Giant as outside the possibilities that Spenser would endorse. Artegall’s arguments, far from disentangling the Knight’s conception of justice from the Giant’s, inadvertently minimize the differences between the two speakers, a detail which should fail to surprise given how the sentiments expressed by Artegall differ from those expressed in *A View of the State of Ireland*.

Even Talus’ bloodshed does not enable the Knight to reappropriate justice’s *topoi* from the Giant; rather, this violence only further links Artegall to his opponent. The Giant bases his plan of reform on his physical agency, his ability to level the cosmos through his titanic violence: “He sayed he would all the earth uptake, / And all the sea, devided each from either: / So would he of the fire one balaunce make” (V.2.31.1-3). Talus’ shouldering the Giant off the cliff enacts this cosmological violence upon the Giant’s own body. As in the Giant’s designs, the narrator’s epic simile blends the elements, comparing the dissolution of the radical’s corporal form to a shipwreck whose “shattered ribs in thousand peeces rives” (V.2.50.3). But the obvious unnaturalness of comparing a corpse to a wracked ship points toward the human agency involved in enforcing laws Artegall describes as essentialist characteristics of the cosmos. And because the Knight has been so closely linked to the Giant’s mode of persuasion, this moment’s irony strongly reflects back on Artegall, a detail further highlighted by the canto’s violation of generic convention. It is worth repeating that in romance the heroic knight is supposed to

slay the monster in lawful combat, not have a subordinate sneak behind him and shoulder him off a cliff while distracted and peacefully debating his point.

The first half of *The Faerie Queene* saw Spenser radically revising and reappraising the familiar conventions of heroic romance. This moment, moving beyond even these previous generic revisions, pushes the *cavaliere errante* tradition past reappraisal into outright subversion, a detail further highlighted by the simile comparing the Giant's corpse to a shipwreck, an image related to one of Spenser's preferred analogies to his own poetry. In keeping with the ancient tradition of figuring the accommodation of writing and reading as a form of travel, Spenser regularly and routinely represents both his composition and the process of reading *The Faerie Queene* as a journey. As a case in point, Book One closes with an extended nautical metaphor comparing the poem to a ship, its characters to passengers, and the poet's intentions for his epic to a "long voyage whereto she [the poem as ship] is bent" (I.12.42.1-9). Startlingly, the simile comparing the Giant's demise to a shipwreck inverts the outcome of the "weather-beaten ship arriu'd on happy shore" that carried Red Cross and Una to safe harbor (II.1.2.9). Seen in context, aside from making literal the violence implicit in Artegall's oratory, this moment shockingly embodies the ferocity of coercive language through the broken form of the Giant himself, and even provides readers with an emblem of narrative failure.

The image of the wracked Giant, moreover, combines two important analogies from Renaissance political theory: the comparison between the human body to a nation and the metaphor that likened the state to a ship at sea. The commonplace equating the state to a human body clearly captured Spenser's imagination, and he frequently used the

analogy as a way to theorize political and social situations. In *A View of the State of Ireland*, for instance, Irenaeus compares the creation of laws to giving medicine to a patient, the use of a Marshall to stamp out an unjust military practice to a surgeon amputating an “unsound or sicke part of the body,” and the change in policy from one Lord Deputy to another to two physicians prescribing different treatments for the same sick body. When pressed about the problems with Catholicism in Ireland, he even objects that authorities cannot address the issue until the nation’s civil strife is resolved, comparing the situation to the need to administer to a sick man’s body before seeking his spiritual salvation in a pragmatic (though theologically dubious) analogy.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, both Eudoxus and Irenaeus describe Ireland in turmoil as a ship in a storm. After having been brought up to date regarding the recent conflicts, Eudoxus asks his friend whether there have “beene any more such tempests...wherein she,” meaning Ireland, “hath thus wretchedly beene wracked?” Irenaeus likewise describes Ireland’s state after Lord Grey’s removal from the Lord Deputyship as having left “the realme...like a ship in a storm, amidst all the raging surges, unrul’d, and undirecte’d of any.”¹⁵⁵ The metaphor describing the Giant’s murder, therefore, has a number of alarming resonances relating to the disintegration of social order.

Compounding this sense of societal collapse, Artegall’s language-as-violence echoes a number of troubling segments from within Book Five and throughout *The Faerie Queene*. The Giant, in other words, is not the only double confronting Artegall: the Knight’s language repeats the vocabulary used by many of Spenser’s most prominent villains. As James Holstun points out, Artegall’s arguments before the Egalitarian Giant contradict the claims he makes while arguing against Munera and Pollente — figures

closely related to the avarice associated by Protestants with the Catholic Church — earlier in the very same canto.¹⁵⁶ At this juncture, Aretgall becomes dangerously similar to the foes he has just dispatched. Likewise, nearly every critic who has examined this episode has noticed the similarity of the statements made by Artegall to Despair's seduction of Red Cross in Book One.¹⁵⁷ The rhetorical *topoi* adopted by Artegall place him in bad company indeed, and these similarities should cause readers and giants alike to question the violence he uses once communication fails.

Joseph Campana, tracing the stakes behind Spenser's representations of cruelty, argues that the first edition of *The Faerie Queene* acts as a meditation on vulnerability, that the poem articulates "an ethical imperative to investigate those limiting fantasies of invulnerability defined as forms as masculinity or the heroic. *The Faerie Queene*...makes a signature intervention in heroic poetry, one that, perhaps counterintuitively, explores vulnerability rather than violence."¹⁵⁸ According to Campana, the first half of Spenser's poem attempts to reform masculinity by acknowledging bodily vulnerability and the pain of others. The second edition of the poem, however, influenced by Spenser's involvement with the colonial project and by a growing concern with the effects and ethics of shame, becomes a work which "excavates the dark underside of vulnerability and the intersection of violence and justice."¹⁵⁹ The 1596 *Faerie Queene*, as such, documents the consequences that follow the failure of Spenser's earlier investment in an ethics of vulnerability. To this I would add that Artegall's inability to empathize with the Giant perfectly encapsulates this failure. The Giant's mutilated corpse, broken and despoiled by Talus, becomes representative of the impossibility of locating political solutions in an awareness of one's own and other's physical vulnerability. In this episode, Spenser's

representation of oratory renders visible the problems inherent within social relations when empathy comes into contact with economic and political disparity. The Knight can afford to disregard the Giant's perspective, personal feelings, and receptivity to pain. When the Giant does the same to Artegall, the consequences are fatal.

The poem's narrative grasps for a solution to the "excavation of justice" manifest in a conflict between speakers with unequal power, but fails to find it in oratory. Neither the Giant nor Artegall provides a positive example of how language can be used to persuade another person, to heal a community, or to constitute a shared sense of social obligation. The complete failure of rhetoric at this juncture, its total lack of instrumental efficacy or ethical propriety, I would argue, differentiates this rhetorical display from its predecessors in classical, medieval, and early modern epic, in Hellenistic or Renaissance romance, and even from portrayals of oratory in ancient histories. Obviously, Homer, Virgil, Herodotus, and countless others have portrayed persuasion as unethical or as ineffective, but rarely has rhetoric failed so spectacularly while simultaneously seeming so immoral. Depictions of persuasion failing are so common that they do not need to be mentioned here. Plato, of course, famously considered rhetoric to be dangerously relativistic, juxtaposing the sophistic technique to his preferred dialectic, but his preoccupation with attacking oratory is also a kind of unwilling concession to its social effectiveness. The same holds true for unflattering depictions of persuasion closer to Spenser's time. Ulysses' speech on order in *Troilus and Cressida*, for example, or Pyrocles' speech on the same subject in Sidney's *Arcadia*, are as manipulative as Artegall's oration to the Giant, but although amoral or even immoral, these speakers are at least extraordinarily successful in achieving their purposes.

The conflict between the Knight and Giant strips rhetoric both of the fantasy of eloquence's unerring successfulness and the civilizing functions ascribed to the discipline by its ancient and humanist proponents.¹⁶⁰ What Spenser creates in this moment is a meta-discourse portraying and critiquing another form of discourse. Yet the existence of this portrayal does not necessarily imply that *The Faerie Queene* condemns *all* varieties of eloquence. In some respects, this moment recalls Red Cross Knight's confrontation with the book-spewing Error in Book One (i.20), but it reverses the trajectory of the earlier episode by privileging the written, or at least the written form of *The Faerie Queene* itself, at the expense of oral communication. In the final tally, embedding a text such as a formal oration (or two) into another text as self-consciously as Spenser does here centers the conflict between Knight and Giant around language itself: this section of Book Five becomes about discourse's relationship to justice. The negative model presented by Artegall highlights Spenser's own eloquence, the simulacrum of a rhetorical exchange acting as a contrast to the participatory, collaborative, relationship between *The Faerie Queene* and its audience. The debate and battle call attention to Spenserian discernment, to the ways in which the author invites readers to bring home the poem's depiction of justice, to become a kind of judge charged with adjudicating arguments, motivations, and the social relations that underlie actions and words.

III: Spenser's Audience, A View of *The State of Ireland*, and Social Struggle

The critical axioms surrounding Book Five largely revolve around Spenser's inability to non-problematically portray the Tudor colonial project in Ireland. Richard McCabe, for example, in one of the first studies to comprehensively discuss the poet's interaction with

Gaelic culture, points to the linguistic and political complexity of Spenser's representation and to *The Faerie Queene's* failure to fashion the Irish as wholly "other," as totally distinct from the English settlers. McCabe describes the poem's habit of defining cultural, ethical, linguistic, and political standards through comparison with their "savage" Irish antithesis as "notoriously hazardous" because "intended contrasts collapse all too easily into unintentional comparisons."¹⁶¹ This collapse certainly occurs throughout Artegall's confrontation with the Giant, but describing this as "unintentional" overlooks both the interrogative character of Spenser's engagement with his troubling Irish experience and the centrality of *problemata* to Renaissance romance. Instead of awaiting deconstruction, the *topoi* blurring Artegall with his opponent reside near the poem's manifest content; Spenser's depiction of the Giant tenaciously breaks down the difference between the virtuous knight and the monster he slays, and by extension, the difference between Irish and English. In the allegorical logic of the poem, this collapse of identity complicates the conceptual boundary between a virtuous sense of justice and the forces that threaten it. Faced with this characteristically ambiguous *problemata*, *A View of the State of Ireland* becomes useful because of the information it provides about how Spenser relates class to England's colonization of its neighbor, and because, as a humanist dialogue, *A View* serves as a point of contrast between persuasion in *The Faerie Queene* and competing forms of eloquence.

Neglecting the dialogue, literary historians have traditionally located the Giant's claims in the records of European peasant rebellions or in the still-powerful specter of Münster's apocalyptic communism, a communal-sectarian government which continued to haunt Elizabethans' view of Anabaptists and other radical Protestants into and beyond

Spenser's lifetime.¹⁶² This episode, however, like the majority of Book Five, repeatedly refers to Ireland. Both the Giant and the rock he stands upon are strongly resonant of *A View of the State of Ireland's* explanation for Folkmotes, sites initially described by Eudoxus as "a place of people, to meete or talke of any thing that concerned any difference between parties and townships," a custom which he approves of, describing the practice as "very requisite."¹⁶³ Right at the first, Eudoxus establishes Folkmotes as sites of conversation and dialogue, places open to a myriad of possibilities facilitated through the responsible use of civic language. Yet, as is also true of Book Five's portrayal of justice, time has a way of degenerating originally beneficial institutions. Once again sounding like the Giant, Irenaeus explains, "howsoever the times when they were first made, might well serve to good occasions...yet things being since altered...the good use that then was of them, is now turned to abuse."¹⁶⁴ What was once a useful custom has been corrupted by Irish parochialism, and has become a site of resistance to English rule. According to Irenaeus, "dangerous are such assemblies, whether for cesse or ought else, the Constables and Officers being also of the Irish; and if any of the English happen to be there, even to them they may prove perillous. Therefore for avoiding such evill occasions, they were best to be abolished."¹⁶⁵ Irenaeus here uses the same phrase to describe Folkmotes that *The Faerie Queene's* narrator uses to describe the Giant's audience. The Irish "make *great assemblies* together upon a Rath or a hill," he tells Eudoxus; likewise, Artegall and Talus witness "Full many people gathered in a crew; / Whose *great assembly* they did much admire" (V.ii.29.5-6).¹⁶⁶

A further detail cements the ties between Irish Folkmotes and the Giant's gathering: the two speakers of *A View* relate legendary stories about how meetings came

to be held on “huge stones” or on cliffs or “high hills.” The Egalitarian Giant, of course, stands on a rock overlooking a cliff when he first encounters Artegall and Talus. Eudoxus compliments his friend’s description: “You have very well declared the originall of their mounts and great stones incompassed, which some vainly terme the ould Giants Trevetts, and thinke that those huge stones would not else be brought into order or reared up, without the strength of gyants.”¹⁶⁷ Seen in this context, the connection between Spenser’s Giant and the legendary Irish giants become obvious; more still, the ambiguity that adheres to *A View’s* description of folkmites also adheres to the Giant’s gathering in Book Five. As Annabel Patterson has pointed out, the custom is never categorically condemned; Eudoxus’ satisfaction with his friend’s description pertains to Irenaeus’ narrative of the folkmites’ “sociohistorical construction, the work of many hands in the service of cultural identity; he continues to insist on the value of places and occasions for self-government.”¹⁶⁸ Neither speaker discounts the custom outright, and even the anti-Irish Irenaeus again ends up sounding much more like the Giant than Artegall.

Recognizing the Giant's gathering as a Folkmite provides an anchor into *The Faerie Queene's* representation of class and hierarchy. I have already mentioned the parallels between Book Five and *A View's* discussion of change’s effect on customs and laws, but references to economic exploitation surprisingly also abound throughout Spenser’s dialogue. I would go so far as to claim that *A View of the State of Ireland* comes close to being preoccupied with class conflict. Significantly, Irenaeus sees both the English and Irish as exploiters. Only a moment after describing Folkmites and relating the legend of the giant’s stone, Irenaeus complains to Eudoxus about the practice of *cesse*, “the obligation to supply the soldiers and the household of the lord deputy with

provisions at prices ‘accessed’ or fixed by government,” which he sees as deeply harmful to the common people of Ireland — and an understandable cause of discontent.¹⁶⁹

it is most hurtfull and offensive to the poore country, and nothing convenient for the souldiers themselves, who, during their lying at cesse, use all kinds of outrageous disorder and villany, both towards the poore men, which victuall and lodge them, as also to all the country round about them, whom they abuse, oppresse, spoyle, and afflict by all the meanes they can invent, for they will not onely not content themselves with such victuals as their hostes nor yet as the place perhaps affords, but they will have other meate provided for them, and *aqua vita* sent for, yea and money besides laide at their trenches, which if they want, then about the house they walk with the wretched poore man and his silly wife, who are glad to purchase their peace with any thing. By which vile manner of abuse, the countrey people, yea and the very English which dwell abroad and see, and sometimes feele this outrage, growe into great destination of the souldiours, and thereby into hatred of the very government, which draweth upon them such evils.¹⁷⁰

Spenser, speaking here through his surrogate Irenaeus, explicitly figures the burden placed upon the lower classes by soldiers as a form of oppression, actually using the verb form of the term to criticize both the Queen’s government and her lord deputies — one of the most direct and riskiest criticisms of Elizabeth’s rule made in the dialogue.

Nor does Spenser spare the Irish equivalent of his own class of landowners, landlords, and free-holders. Irenaeus goes into great length about how they

set out their land in farme or for the terme of yeares, to their tennants, but onely from yeare to yeare...to racke their tennants, laying upon them coigny and livery at pleasure, and exacting of them (besides his covenants) what he pleaseth. So that the poore husbandman either dare not binde himself to him for longer tearme, or thinketh, by continuall liberty of change to keep his land-lord the rather in awe of wronging him.¹⁷¹

Spenser critiques local practices, drawing a distinction between the colonizers and colonized by portraying English social relations as more equitable than the relations practiced by the “othered” Irish (although the passage at least suggests that English settlers are adopting these oppressive habits and are contributing to the problem). But the

fact that Spenser is willing at all to figure class exploitation as a problem in the Irish state speaks to his capacity to entertain claims similar to the Giant's. Unlike the Giant, Spenser's speakers insist on "reformation," not violent rebellion, but both Irenaeus and Eudoxus admit that social and economic oppression contributes to unrest. Oppression of the lower orders is at once a plague on the colonial government and a justification for its existence.

Although Irenaeus does not consistently sympathize with the Irish poor, he frequently focuses on how the ephemerality of material conditions foments violence: "the tenement being left at his liberty is fit for every occasion of change that shall be offered by time: and so much also the more ready and willing is he to runne into the same, for that hee hath no such coste imployed in fensing or husbanding the same, as might withhold him from any such wilfull course, as his lords cause, or his owne lewde disposition may carry him into."¹⁷² Irenaeus is likewise careful to insist that organized rebellion in Ireland is always a top-down affair, that the lower order's resistance to English rule is actually another form of exploitation, telling Eudoxus that "all the inferiour sort are brought under the command of their lords, and forced to follow them into any action whatsoever. Now this you are to understand, that all the rebellions which you see from time to time happen in Ireland, are not begun by the common people, but by the lords and captaines of countries."¹⁷³ The superficially democratic implication is that rebellion against the English lacks legitimacy because it is not based upon actual grievances from the Irish people, but is instead caused by the nobility's "wilfull obstinacy against the government."¹⁷⁴

Expressing skepticism toward conceits naturalizing hierarchy makes sense given

the Tudor propensity to locate the excellence of the English state within its supposedly mixed constitution, and given Spenser's own position as a figure "self-fashioned" through ambitious gambits dependent upon market forces. As Jean Feerick — one of the few readers of *A View* to account for the dialogue's attacks on feudal relations and the English center — notes in regards to the New English, "the majority of settlers were not high-ranking aristocrats but rather midlevel administrators, men who had never known and yet, we might speculate, had always envied the privileges of their social superiors."¹⁷⁵ Nevertheless, with the exception of Feerick, the critical literature on *A View*'s relationship to Book Five's Giant essentially ignores the dialogue's concern with class relations, largely, I think, because it does not obviously conform to notions about how a colonial apologist like Spenser should conceive of the connection between class and imperialism. Due to his status as a significant landowner, the expectation exists that the author should make or endorse ideological justifications for hierarchy, just as Artegall does in his encounter with the Giant and his followers. Meeting these expectations, Irenaeus' language is at times dotted with disdain for his social inferiors. He speaks of "unrulie people" attempting to use popular aggression to affect law, that "in the violence of that furie, tread downe and trample under foote all both divine and humane things, and the lawes themselves they doe specially rage at, and rend in peeces, as most repugnant to their libertie and natural freedome, which in their madness they affect." Eudoxus agrees, remarking, "It is then a very unseasonable time to plead law, when swords are in the hands of the vulgar, or to thinke to retaine them with feare of punishments, when they looke after liberty, and shake off all government."¹⁷⁶ But for the most part, these comments are exceptional and not at all characteristic of Spenser's attitude toward non-

elite members of Irish society.

I refer to *A View* throughout this section as an illustration of the horizons of Spenser's thought, or more precisely, its relative lack of horizon when discussing the Elizabethan social order. It is still commonly assumed that the feelings of readerly unease created by Artegall's oratory, and by the execution of the Giant and the murder of the debate's audience, is an anachronistic response, unrelated to the poem's conceptual design, that Spenser could not have possibly intended for readers to feel sympathy for Talus' victims and horror at their brutalization. Nevertheless, while Spenser was obviously bounded by his historical circumstances, *A View* demonstrates that he had access to (and frequently used) two related sets of *loci communes*, the first concerned with exploitation and oppression and the second concerned with the harm caused by the degeneration of originally beneficial traditions. Even putting aside the content and formal attributes of Book Five discussed in the third section of this chapter, the focus on class in *A View* strongly suggests a receptivity toward several of the *topoi* used by the Giant — or at least an appreciation for the root causes that lead to his rebellion. The Giant is foolish, temperamentally unbalanced, but Artegall, too, lacks self-control. As Hadfield has recently argued, "there seems to be no mean — or balance — between the extremes of rebellion and mass slaughter. The most plausible reading is not that Spenser sympathizes strongly with one side rather than the other, but that things have gone badly awry and that there is a lack of equilibrium."¹⁷⁷ If this episode portrays English response to Irish resistance, it is a portrayal of colonial mismanagement.

A View of the State of Ireland, of course, is not a magical key that unlocks the political allegory of *The Faerie Queene*. The dialogue is nevertheless a useful touchstone:

even its differences from Spenser's epic, its focused argument contrasted against the poem's semiotically rich *fabulae*, is illustrative. Obviously, *The Faerie Queene* and *A View of the State of Ireland* are generically dissimilar texts; perhaps less obviously, they do not resemble one another as examples of persuasion. *A View* is a sophisticated work of Tudor humanism, and dialogues are, by definition, multi-vocal.¹⁷⁸ Nevertheless, a single voice dominates the text: while Eudoxus is portrayed as well-meaning and intelligent, he is also admittedly ignorant of the situation in Ireland, and he regularly defers to Irenaeus, a well-informed and pragmatic representative of the New English settlers. Eudoxus interrogates his friend, asking questions to which Irenaeus replies at great length. Irenaeus' responses frequently contain extensive digressions, and despite the fact that Eudoxus usually asks and Irenaeus answers, the latter speaker controls the dialogue. Eudoxus accedes to and at times even accepts corrections from Irenaeus. Taken as a whole, the argument of *A View of the State of Ireland* is Irenaeus' argument: violent, unsentimental, and clearly directed at convincing readers to adopt his scorched-earth policy of reform.

Unlike the dialogue, *The Faerie Queene* portrays arguments as much as it enacts them, providing the carefully curated illusion of an Archimedean point from which to witness how persuasion and language can obscure the truth about social relations. *The Faerie Queene* moves and influences, achieving a set of affects, operating through the complex sets of "identifications" that, in Kenneth Burke's sense of the term, make any act of reading possible in the first place.¹⁷⁹ Book Five obviously seeks to alter its readers' understanding of justice, and the poem also makes a number of explicitly political "claims." Unlike *A View*, these are largely arguments about representation: they

are assertions about the correct way to depict a particular situation and a particular locale. The exchange between Artegall and his listeners throws into relief the relationship between *The Faerie Queene* and its audience: it encourages readers to judge what they witness in the poem's narrative. Spenser's ability to articulate voices as diverse as Artegall's, the Giant's, and the poem's narrator — the creation of a seemingly objective impression that, to recall Andrew Hadfield's words, "things have gone badly awry and that there is a lack of equilibrium" — all allow Spenser to assume the authority bequeathed by an apparently impartial distance from the events he describes. Taken as a whole, the invitation to collaborate is the hook that draws *The Faerie Queene's* reader along. As the romance progresses, it teaches its audience how to read itself, correcting first impressions without becoming violently intrusive. This participatory model of poetic accommodation, however, also constructs the poem's ethos as a trusted guide; it obscures the fact that the poem can not really be as impartial as it plays at being.

The forensic detachment of Artegall's debate with the Giant, along with the poem's ostensibly non-coercive mode of eloquence, becomes a performance of justice in and of itself. It prepares readers to accept Book Five's allegories concerning the situation in Ireland and Protestant England's conflict with Catholic Spain. If, as the depiction of the conflict between Artegall and the Egalitarian Giant seems to imply, Book Five's mimesis can adequately represent such thorny subjects as the distortion of justice caused by unequal social and economic statuses, it can surely represent religious and political controversies as well.

IV: Conclusion—Interpretation and Conflict

Aretgall's debate with and murder of the Giant and his audience accrues authority for Spenser's poem at the expense of the traditional attribute usually delegated to oratory: its civilizing function. That is to say, the episode strips oratory in order to enrich poetry. The murder of the Giant, his shattered body analogically associated with the fractured political state Artegall's language fails to repair, points to the efficacy of Spenser's own eloquence, its ability to epitomize the journey of justice in an imperfect and fallen world, including the poem's ruminations on Ireland. Yet, because the moment is so completely concerned with what occurs when readers fail to adapt to the language they interpret, finally, the episode serves as a warning. The conflict with the Giant sanctions both the poem's shadowing of English imperialism and its depiction of Irish resistance to this conquest. But the Giant's fate also serves as a stark reminder of the thinness of the line between rhetoric and oppression, between language and violence, and between eloquence and propaganda. Even as the poem works to persuade and to influence, the episode of the Egalitarian Giant acts as an incomplete but still-useful fragment of a phenomenology of reading, one which acknowledges the hazards of communication, suggesting how the historicity and contingency of arguments, their relation to the social and the economic, determines which perspectives are ultimately triumphant and which voices are dashed on the sharp rocks of time's ocean.

CHAPTER 3

THEATRUM MUNDI: RHETORIC, ROMANCE, AND LEGITIMATION IN THE TEMPEST AND THE WINTER'S TALE

As with all forms of *poesis*, Renaissance humanists categorized drama as a sister discourse to oratory. Pedagogues used dramatic texts, particularly those containing portrayals of persuasion, as storehouses for commonplaces and examples. Justifications for theater, meanwhile, exploited the same Ciceronian arguments about the civilizing power of *exempla* as other forms of fiction.¹⁸⁰ John Webster's 1615 pamphlet, *An Excellent Actor*, to cite one example, compares players to the *Hercules Gallicus* emblem depicting the Greek hero dragging a chain of men attached to his tongue, a representation of rhetorical efficacy famous from Alciati's *Emblemata*. According to Webster, "whatsoever is commendable in the graue orator" is "most exquisitly perfect" in the actor.¹⁸¹ Theater, moreover, had a more reciprocal relationship to rhetoric than other forms of poetry: oratory, particularly the canon of delivery, clearly possessed performative elements. More importantly, rhetoricians frequently compared the ethical inculcation supposedly instilled by eloquence to the self-reflexivity of dramatic representation. Theorists, especially those with a background in stoic philosophy, explicitly conceptualized ethical behavior as a kind of moral role-playing, relating a life well lived to an actor embodying the role of a virtuous personage in a comedy. Still, the longstanding connection between the two arts did not ensure that dramatizations of oratory flattered rhetoricians. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*, the subjects of this chapter, provide audiences with a clinic on the different ways oratory can fail.

These tragicomic-romances depict conventional eloquence as ineffectual when forced to confront patriarchal rulers whose speech and actions exceed the measured self-control that traditionally served as a justification both for masculine authority and for the subjugation of the lower orders by their social superiors. *The Winter's Tale* depicts the enraged and delusional Leontes as incapable of responding rationally to reasoned argument. *The Tempest* represents Prospero as unaffected by attempts at persuasion—ironically given that the exiled duke repeatedly associates himself with humanist practices. Although presented ambiguously or negatively throughout much of their plays, both Prospero and Leontes conclude their character arcs by gesturing toward reformation, repentance, and forgiveness. In both cases, these circumscribed, conflicted, and deeply troubled gestures are effected, not through oratory, but via artifices directly related to theater: the masques and songs of *The Tempest* which calm Prospero's rage and help him accept his mortality and Paulina's statue trick in *The Winter's Tale*, a device which facilitates the play's comic ending. These tragicomic-romances, I argue, contrast the efficacy of metatheatrical conceits with the problematic response generated by formal argument, linking persuasion to masculine domination, constructing a gendered and classed divide between the two forms of eloquence.

Theatrical artifice succeeds in *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* by adapting the comparison between moral and theatrical acting, by offering a model of ethics that encourages men and women to conceptualize morality as pragmatic performance, as a form of role-playing dependent upon critiquing oneself as though one were an actor in a play.¹⁸² The *inventio* of *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* literalizes the *locus communis* of the world resembling a theater (*theatrum mundi*), turning the ancient

analogy inside out, refracting moral performance on the world-stage through its representation in theatrical performance. Usually traced to Petronius, the *theatrum mundi* commonplace actually originates in stoic doctrine.¹⁸³ Cicero's *De Officiis*, for instance, refers to Panaetius' teaching about the unity of morality by making an analogy with acting. Cicero stresses the importance of seeking out the good, but since most men lack the capacity for philosophic reasoning, and since even philosophers fail to agree on what constitutes the good, a person who desires to be virtuous should *imitate* their *idea* of how a virtuous person behaves. Cicero admits that the men we live with lack ideal wisdom, but insists they still have the capacity to seek out a *simulacra virtutis*, a simulacrum of virtue.¹⁸⁴ For Cicero, this imitation of perfect morality has a social component, what the orator-statesman refers to as "decorum."¹⁸⁵ In relation to oratory or poetry, decorum implies adapting one's language to circumstances or audiences, or in the case of fiction, endowing characters with a voice and vocabulary appropriate for their person.¹⁸⁶ Placed in this ethical context, the concept becomes performative in a different way: a person who wants to exhibit fortitude, for example, should *act* in a way that *seems* virtuous and proper.¹⁸⁷ This, as Jamey E. Graham notes, collapses moral and aesthetic judgments: "If we are actors performing what we ought to be, then deciding what is right in a given instance will mean deciding what is attractive or fitting in our role."¹⁸⁸

Paulina's and Ariel's use of theater as persuasion works, then, because it transforms Leontes and Prospero into better actors and better readers of their own behavior. This turning of the *theatrum mundi* commonplace back on itself does more than depict drama as superior to oratory: this figuration actively participates in a fiction about the relationship between London's commercial theater and its audience, enacting a

fantasy of theater speaking to and for women and the lower orders. On the one hand, this cultural inheritance refines the humanist ideal of eloquence fostering social mobility and cultural cohesion.¹⁸⁹ On the other hand, this legitimizing narrative allows popular theater to justify itself as an accommodating force facilitating exchanges between the different strata of Jacobean society. As examples of stage-romances, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* portray their own medium as capable of expressing and mediating complex social dynamics. Of course, outside the realm of ideals and theory, theatrical efficacy always depends upon on-stage embodiment. As Vin Nardizzi has recently pointed out, “theater’s success in its humanist task is contingent....on the actor in performance.”¹⁹⁰ But I do not suggest that Shakespeare’s theater actually possesses the kind of efficacy assigned to it in *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. Instead I claim that these tragicomic-romances make an argument *about* their own efficacy; they *model* particular forms of visual performance having success. Shakespeare’s late works offer a portrayal, a second-order mimesis, of benevolent persuasion that would appeal to the consumers who attended his plays. London’s commercial theater resided in an increasingly cosmopolitan city developing amid an emerging marketplace where commercial drama had to appeal to a variety of persons.¹⁹¹ As Jean Howard points out, Renaissance drama’s apparent self-reflexivity partially responds to cultural and economic changes, including a heightened social mobility which encouraged men and women to conceptualize their identities as though they were actors in a self-scripted theater. Drama, according to Howard, participated in the “struggles surrounding the social changes coincident with the emergence both of antitheatrical polemic and a dramatistic sense of life.”¹⁹² Unlike Ben Jonson, who attempted to manage and negotiate market expectations, Shakespeare turns

the need to entertain a popular audience into an argument for the transformative power of theater—and it is this argument which is traced throughout this chapter.¹⁹³

The first section of this chapter introduces the most widely disseminated early modern description of the *theatrum mundi* commonplace, John Alday's 1566 translation of Pierre Boaistuau's *Le Théâtre du monde*. I begin with this treatise, not because I believe Shakespeare directly draws upon Alday, but because this text elucidates how early modern intellectuals used the theater/world analogy while also suggesting how Shakespeare's staging of the commonplace bends tradition in order to affirm the social purpose of playacting. My second section shows that *The Winter's Tale* initially portrays Leontes as fixated on the visual and unable to use rhetorical accommodation to interpret the events around him. I then argue that Paulina draws upon religious commonplaces to effect a performance of redemption from the bereaved Leontes, in the process using the *theatrum mundi* analogy to exemplify theatrical efficacy. Turning next to *The Tempest*, I examine how the romance-tragicomedy's representation of political instability disturbs traditional justifications for hierarchy, a crisis in legitimation only navigated when Ariel causes Prospero to recognize the performativity of ethical and social relations. I conclude by arguing that, in portraying morality and rank as performative, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* validate both theatrical efficacy and the ethos of romance while also figuring social and political formations as forms of *poesis*—as unnatural but not necessarily inefficacious artifacts. Even as these plays reshape drama as commodity, because of their emphasis on the performativity of self-control, they interrogate traditional legitimations for order and patriarchal rule, an interrogation pressuring but not necessarily undermining justifications for hierarchy. As I will show, Shakespeare's late

tragicomic-romances not only portray personal behavior as performance, they represent political, civic, and gendered formations as complex forms of socially constructed artifice.

I: *Theatrum Mundi*: Boaistuau, Alday, and Romance

The analogy between life and theater received its best-known early modern formulation in the works of the French humanist, Pierre Boaistuau. In 1558, Boaistuau published a pamphlet in French and Latin titled *Le Théâtre du monde*, divided into three sections concerned with, among other subjects, life's miseries, the vanity of ambition, and the felicity of virtue. The first part of the book compares humans to beasts, showing that people are inferior to them in many respects; the second part discourses on misery; and the third describes how adversity eventually leads to the knowledge of God. All three sections pillage *exempla* from classical, ecclesiastical, and biblical sources, shaping a diverse body of quotations and citations into a long piece of epideictic rhetoric.¹⁹⁴

Although little read today, the book proved to be an international bestseller, quickly running through several editions. The Elizabethan scholar, John Alday, translated it into English in 1566 as:

Theatrum Mundi, The Theator or rule of the world, wherein may be sene the running race and course of euerye mans life, as touching miserie and felicity, wherein is contained wonderfull examples, learned deuises, to the ouerthrowe of vice, and exalting of vertue.¹⁹⁵

As with Boaistuau's original, the work proved to be a popular success, going through three editions by 1581, quickly becoming an influential source for the ancient *topos*. The book's dedication to James Beaton, the Archbishop of Glasgow, notes that despite everything he has achieved, "man is so masked and disguised, that he knoweth not

himselfe. He is the Heraulde, beginner and foreshewer of things containyd in the circute of this worlde, and yet he is blinde and dumbe in his owne doings."¹⁹⁶ Having addressed mankind's vanity, Boaistuau explains how his program encourages self-reflection:

In consideration wherof (my good Lord) I haue vnto him addressed this Rule, by the which he may contemplate and aduise, without being drawn beside him selfe, his infirmitie and miserie, (to the ende) that making an anotomie or foreshewing of all the partes of his life, he be the sooner moued to detest & abhorre his vile and corrupt liuing. And if we would be equitable Iudges of humaine actions, what is this worlde, anye other than a Rule, circle or compasse, where as some play the handicraftes men, & of base condicion, others represent Kings, Dukes, Earles, Marquesses, Knights, Barons and others constituted in dignities, and notwithstanding, assoone as they haue layde downe their maskings and disguisings, and that death cometh, which maketh an ende of this bloudie Tragedie, then they knowe themselues to be all men, and wretched sinners, and then the Lorde God which is in heauen, laugheth at their foolish enterprises.¹⁹⁷

Here Boaistuau (translated by Alday) describes the examples provided by his book as a "Rule," meaning a measure or a standard of discrimination, while also using the term in the sense of "condition," as in a description of the state of the world. His syntax, in fact, unites the two meanings in claiming that the *theatrum mundi* analogy provides readers with an "anotomie," a model of life which invites analysis and contemplation, a view or a conspectus of human behavior.

Boaistuau reduces earthly ranks to parts assumed in a tragedy, dismissing the importance of hierarchy while potentially discouraging contemplation about social relations. The author does not deny the existence of injustice in terrestrial affairs, but he personalizes and individualizes the problems of inequality as vice and sin. For Boaistuau, conditions, dignities, and ranks serve only as inessential masks, personas taken off at death. The device of the *Theatrum Mundi*, according to its author, enables readers to judge the virtue of men and women without reference to social status, and through

reflection, to scrutinize their own behavior, to see themselves in the examples provided by its text. In a dedicatory poem prefacing his translation, Alday makes both this purpose and the Ciceronian origin of the commonplace explicit, stating that his book presents the "finall scope, the totall ende, / the wandring steps wherein / *Humanum genus* seemes to tende."¹⁹⁸ As in Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*, "scope," adapted from the Greek, *skopos*, refers to the target or purpose of a piece of persuasion, the goal of learning.¹⁹⁹ Like many classical and early modern theorists, Alday conceptualizes the scope of reading as a journey, as wandering, and as *nostos*. But true to the title of the book he translates, Alday's governing metaphor is theatrical. He compares man's "scope" to "a pageant to begin, / Most like a Theater" which "as with Tulley's work" presents "a Glasse whereon to looke."²⁰⁰ That is, following Cicero's precepts, Alday offers his translation as a mirror which enables readers to examine their own performance of morality.

To an extent, the *Theatrum Mundi* explicitly articulates a set of cultural premises which Shakespeare's late romances implicitly model. As the following sections will show, *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale* literalize—in the same sense that the Globe's name and shape literalize—the comparison between theater and the world, creating a dense matrix of reference which significantly alters the social ramifications of what was even then a hoary commonplace. The problematic representations of characters such as Prospero and Leontes model a reaction to theatrical artifice, functioning as a "Rule, circle or compasse" which provides an "anotomie or foreshewing" of the audience's own morality. Yet unlike the use of this model in Boaistuau and Alday, this on-stage embodiment transforms social authority into a performance, one ostensibly open to the discernment of audiences.

II: Sight, Accommodating Performance, and *The Winter's Tale*

At the beginning of *The Tempest*, Ariel fails to persuade a nearly archetypal patriarch using conventional oratory, provoking rage and threats after reminding Prospero about his promise of freedom. He then transitions to using music and visual proofs, both closely associated with theater, successfully inducing a performance of reformation from his audience. Although the resemblance has not been much remarked upon, in this respect, Ariel parallels another figure from Shakespeare's late romances: Paulina from *The Winter's Tale*. Both *The Tempest* and the earlier romance have obvious affinities, their genre for one, but both also explore the limitations of learning, inviting questions about the capacity for reformation, and about which forms of eloquence accomplish ethical instruction most effectively. Like *The Tempest*, the first half of *The Winter's Tale* depicts rhetorical failure. Leontes, as this section highlights, fixates on the visual while also suffering from an inability to correctly accommodate verbal arguments or ocular proofs within their proper context. In their way, the judicial orations spoken to Leontes' court by Hermione and Paulina testify to the power of eloquence (3.2.21-200).²⁰¹ The two women invent near-perfect arguments, paradigms of Ciceronian forensic oratory, yet the surprising efficacy of Mariana's language in *Pericles*, a tragicomic-romance which portrays rhetoric generating an almost magically efficacious response, meets its sinister reflection in *The Winter's Tale*. Techniques which, in theory, *should* succeed, fail utterly.

But how closely does Hermione and Paulina's oratory conform to classical and contemporary models? Quentin Skinner, writing about *The Winter's Tale* in his recently published book on Shakespeare and forensic rhetoric, claims that "Hermione appears

entirely ignorant” in regards to the advice of classical orators on how to respond to a hostile judge. According to Skinner, Hermione “mounts three speeches in her own defense, but she largely contents herself with making an appeal to heaven while adding swelling protestations about her loyalty and her willingness to die.”²⁰² Contra Skinner, Hermione only speaks a single oration at her trial, an apology that makes a remarkable case for her innocence through the invention of several different proofs. Leontes interrupts her three times, but the contours of her argument clearly follow classical precedent. Her protest that it does not matter how she defends herself because:

Since what I am to say must be but that
Which Contradicts my accusation, and
The testimony on my part no other
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me
To say ‘not guilty.’ Mine integrity
Being counted falsehood shall as I express it,
Be so received. (3.2 20-6)

serves as her *exordium*, one that establishes that the accusations made against her stem from a predetermined belief about her character and not from any external evidence or enthymematic reasoning (categories which Aristotle refers to as extrinsic or intrinsic proofs). Her appeal to heaven about her innocence allows her to invent a *narratio* with what Cicero refers to as “weight,” “*gravitate*” (3.2.26-29). Cicero identifies two kinds of narrations, one based on events and one based on character, “*personis*.” Hermione clearly adopts the latter kind, “a “form of narrative...of such a sort that it can be seen not only in events but also the conversation and mental attitude of the characters.”²⁰³ The three points of her *divisio* consist of 1) her description about her faultless past conduct (3.2.30-5), which alongside her background, descent, education, and her defiance in the face of death substantiates her “honour” and establishes her ethos both as a speaker and as a

defendant (3.2.35-40); 2) her reminder that she only fraternized with Polixines because Leontes commanded her to do so; and 3) her assertion that she has no idea why Camillo, whom she affirms as honest, fled the court (3.2.57-74). Her final claim not to fear Leontes' judgment and her recounting of her sorrows and her forced separation from her children confirms her innocence and acts as her *conclusio* (3.2.89-114). Taken altogether, Hermione strongly defends herself, especially given that her opponent, who wields absolute power over her person, offers no rational proofs incriminating her in any way. Hermione, unfortunately, does not use the strategies recommended by early modern rhetorical manuals to specifically respond to tyrants. She does not, for instance, resort to *philophronesis*, the assuaging, gentle mode of speech which Henry Peacham recommends for such a situation.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, the structure of her argument accords with several teachings from both classical and early modern rhetorical manuals.

The first part of her *divisio*, for example, closely follows Peacham's advice by using *peristasis*, the accumulation of personal detail, to amplify on her individual circumstances.²⁰⁵ Peacham recommends certain subjects as useful for this figure: "parentage, nation, countrie, kinde, age, education, difcipline, habite of bodie, fortune, condition, nature of the minde, ftudie, foredeeds, name, etc."²⁰⁶ She follows Peacham's list nearly to the letter. Hermione only fails because Leontes, his *ratio* corrupted, cannot fall under the influence of *oratio*. The King's diseased wit causes him to act under the mistaken belief that the visions he sees require no interpretation, that "cogitation" maps on perfectly to sight. Stated differently, Leontes makes no distinction between thought and the external world he witnesses with his eyes:

Ha' not you seen...
But that's past doubt: you have, or your eye-glass

Is thicker than a cuckold's horn—or heard,—
For to a vision so apparent rumour
Cannot be mute—or thought—for cogitation
Resides not in that man that does not think—
My wife is slippery? (1.2.269-75)

Unfortunately, the King denies the importance of accommodation where he needs it most: in his interactions with people of differing statuses and power, his communication with women, children, and subordinates. Leontes fails to recognize the profoundly overdetermined nature of reception, the reality that he *de-facto* mediates the objects of his senses through his own already socially situated perspective. When he asks the beleaguered Camillo if he "Ha' not seen," he uses the term in the sense of "understood" or "recognize," but the King confusedly transitions from the analogy between cognition and sight to referencing literal seeing in less than a sentence, in the space of a parenthetical dash. Acting like a cancer of the imagination, the deranged King's "sight" practically subsumes his other perceptions. Although Leontes remains unconscious of his preoccupation, he once again inadvertently indicts his vision at Hermione's trial:

There may be in the cup
A spider steeped, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected; but if one present
Th' abhorred ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider. (2.1.41-7)

Leontes presumably refers to witnessing signs of Hermione's infidelity and how this affects his mental state, but the nightmarish potency of the analogy, itself a vivid example of *enargeia*, paints vision in its entirety as a deadly poison.

Ironically, the same susceptibility to visual influence which introduces tragedy into Sicilia opens the door for comedy in Bohemia. As with Prospero in *The Tempest*,

however, this performance of redemption depends upon a susceptibility to theatrical performance. From its Sicilian opening onward, *The Winter's Tale* connects ethical reformation, performance, and sight. Leontes only realizes the destruction wrought by his unjust actions after the death of Mamillius and the apparent death of Hermione, but an earlier spectacle bridging religious ritual and theatrical display prepares the King to receive this epiphany. Moments before the trial, Apollo's oracle, warning about the consequences of Leontes' actions and judgements, enters the stage with attendants and officers, an arrival which probably resembled a procession in its original staging. Hermione's "death" itself functions as a kind of performance, one that transforms a trial into a tragedy, a courtroom into a stage. Bracketing off the possibility that Hermione actually perishes and is later resurrected as unlikely, the Queen either fakes her own demise or else Paulina, the figure who informs the court about Hermione's "death," creates an impromptu drama adapting a fainting spell into something more potent. The final turn—in which Paulina uses a "statue" of Hermione to stage a tableau of resurrection and reconciliation, developing this into an argument for the morality of theater, "an art," Leontes refers to as "magic," but a magic as "Lawful as eating" (5.3.110-11)—extends a logic which originates from much earlier in the play.

On a superficial level, with its allusions to Giulio Romano and its famous living statue, the conclusion of *The Winter's Tale* unmistakably intervenes in the paragon debates, the traditional dispute between the word (poetry) and the image (the visual arts) concerning which mode of representation holds primacy, which medium has the greatest sway over the human mind. Yet just asserting that *The Winter's Tale* portrays theatrical performance as combining the best elements from both forms of mimesis only touches

the surface of the tragicomic-romance's content. Like Prospero learning from Ariel in *The Tempest*, Leontes learns from Paulina how to perform as a virtuous actor on the world stage. More specifically, Paulina teaches Leontes how to act out certain cultural scripts, cultural habits which, when performed in an actual theater, double as literal scripts. Paulina teaches remorse, using ritual and display to cause the King of Sicilia to assume the role of a repentant sinner. Ashamed of his earlier crimes, the Leontes of *The Winter's Tale's* second half plays the part of the wayfaring and erring penitent. The Sicilian courtiers even directly frame this behavior as ethical role-playing: exhorting the still-grieving monarch to forgive himself and remarry, Cleomenes tells Leontes, "Sir you have done enough, and have *performed* / A saint-like sorrow" (5.1.1-2).²⁰⁷ This reference offhandedly linking performance and sanctity points to Paulina's immersion of Leontes within a program of visual re-education, a theatrical curriculum drawing on a secularized form of religious discourse. To be more exact, *The Winter's Tale* uses a set of *topoi* closely associated with Augustine's and Erasmus' interpretations of Paul, an understanding of the Saint as—to use Kathy Eden's words—a “master-rhetorician and advocate for accommodation.”²⁰⁸ Suitably enough given that her name suggests she is a female version of the apostle, Paulina teaches more than the performance of faith; she teaches the practice of interpreting the objects of sight through an accommodating perspective.

As in *Othello*, another play about masculine paranoia over spousal fidelity, *The Winter's Tale* secularizes faith in God by identifying religious belief with faith in a loved one. The tragicomic-romance, nonetheless, pushes things further than the tragedy by closely associating religious belief with faith in theatrical illusion.²⁰⁹ The earlier work

codifies Othello's betrayal of Desdemona, his willingness to accept "ocular proof" at the expense of the less tangible, less visible, faith in female virtue, as a conversion away from Christianity, as a fall from and rejection of divine grace.²¹⁰ Something similar occurs in *The Winter's Tale*. Both plays work off different aspects of *Hebrews* 11:1's assertion that "faith is the ground of things which are hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not fene."²¹¹ This famous outline of Pauline faith stands in stark opposition to both Leontes' and Othello's obsession with the supposedly self-evident character of visual example. *Hebrews*, after all, compares relying on ocular proofs in matters of belief to heresy. The very next verse, for example, states that faith helps the saved recognize that God created the world *ex nihilo*, "fo that the things which we fe, are not made of things which did appeare," associating a focus on sight with the orthodoxically condemned belief that God shaped creation out of previously existing, eternal matter.²¹² Yet unlike in *Othello*, *The Winter's Tale* suggests that certain forms of visual immersion possess redemptive qualities. Significantly, the success of these modes of persuasion depend upon the already alluded to Pauline/Augustinian understanding of proper accommodation: the idea that correct interpretation should be rooted in a spirit of generosity and faith—an ethos closely associated with the self-evaluative performance instilled in Leontes by Hermione.

Structurally, *The Winter's Tale* resembles a narrative of conversion, even comparing in certain respects to a morality play, a representation of an individual's spiritual regeneration within the body of Christ. But the play's romance elements, the references to pagan oracles, pastoral conventions, and impossible geographies strongly clash with the many references to providence and faith. Dismissing all these secular

narrative conventions as so much inessential outward show, as the external covering of a spiritual lesson, provides an easy solution to this dissonance. The effect of Paulina's exhortation to "awaken your faith," however, does not accrue power for any specific Church, whether Anglican, Protestant, Catholic, or otherwise. Instead, the play acquires influence for itself, encouraging audiences to fall under the affects of theater, to suspend disbelief, to lose oneself in the world of a fiction. *The Winter's Tale's* implausible turns, Bohemian coastlines, sudden bear attacks, and living statues repeatedly dare auditors to reject the play's enchantments while simultaneously using a form of persuasion based on the appropriation of religious *topoi* to discourage this response.

Nevertheless, the ambiguity between the religious and dramatic, between belief and performativity, spills over into the play's depiction of an attribute historically associated with the Reformation's embrace of Augustinian theology: the Protestant focus on individual interiority. Despite containing a handful of the most vivid depictions of cognition in Shakespeare's canon, as both *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* progress, the distinction between performing a role and the "authentic" expression of inner states first distorts and then collapses entirely. As my next few sections will show, in *The Tempest*, the audience's inability to access the genuineness of Prospero's conversion, whether his character has been changed by his experience on the island, and whether this even matters given his treatment of inferiors, causes the play's final resolution to seem equivocal. Likewise, *The Tempest's* audience lacks access to Antonio's interior state; his troubling silence when faced with Prospero's offer of forgiveness remains a loose end as the play finishes. *The Winter's Tale's* denouement features a similar tonal ambiguity. The avowed performativity of Leontes' reformation invites inquiries about the relationship

between his behavior and inner character. And in a reversal of *The Tempest*, Hermione, the wronged party, remains silent when pressed for forgiveness by her husband. Gestures bridge these silences in many staged productions of both plays, but leaving audiences without clear access to Antonio's and Hermione's thoughts actually fits well with the tensions that animate these tragicomic-romances' final moments. Both denouements trouble the concept of authenticity, reducing the distinction between the performance of behavior and inward motivation. Consequently, they also trouble the distinction between faith and outward show.

Starting with Jacques' quasi-parodic evocation in his mock oration on the "seven ages of man," moving onto the many references that hold together both *Hamlet* the play and Hamlet the character, and finishing with Macbeth's "poor player / That struts and frets his hour on the stage," a reader could trace a small history of an idea by examining the *theatrum mundi* conceit's relationship to Shakespearean interiority.²¹³ Simply stated, when Shakespeare's characters demonstrate self-reflection, they often express psychological development or thought through this commonplace. But if the *locus* could express interiority, early modern readers also knew it could dangerously blur the line between seeming and being, between outside states and public roles, and between appearance and substance. Citing Petronius, Montaigne asserts:

Most of our vacations [occupations] are like playes. *Mundus universus exercet histrioniam. All the world doth practise stage-playing*; we must play our parts duly, but as the part of a borrowed personage; we must not make real essence of a mask and outward appearance; nor of a strange person, our own; we cannot distinguish the skin from the shirt: 'tis enough to meal the face, without mealing the breast. I see some who transform and transubstantiate themselves into as many new shapes and new beings as they undertake new employments; and who strut and fume even to the heart and liver, and carry their state along with them even to the close-stool: I cannot make them distinguish the salutations made to themselves from those made to their commission, their train, or their mule.²¹⁴

The Winter's Tale second half takes this cultural anxiety to its logical conclusion by withholding many of the markers of psychological detail so prominent in its early acts. The “redeemed” Leontes of the play's Bohemian setting fails to provide a speech half as revealing as his earlier harangue on seeing “the spider.” This may, in part, be a function of venue. Lorna Hutson links the London stage’s creation of the illusion of interiority to “a forensic conception of narrative which helps produce the complex temporal effects of different characterological ‘points of view.’”²¹⁵ Because of the close association between persona and forensic rhetoric, it makes a kind of sense that the focus on Leontes’ motivations and thought processes decrease once the scene shifts away from courtroom drama to pastoral reconciliation. In *The Winter's Tale*’s second half, instead of being provided with the verbal accoutrements which create the illusion of characters possessing individual psychologies, audiences *witness* Leontes’ behavior, *see* him comport himself as the repentant sinner, and *observe* his response to the statue trick. This emphasis on visual example does not necessarily invalidate his conversion, but it forces onlookers to wonder about the events depicted on stage. Leontes, after all, initially stumbles due to an overreliance on sight, and this closing focus on ocular representation raises the possibility that audiences, too, could be misled by their senses.

This loose end arises, I suggest, because Shakespeare’s play moves away from depicting ethical transformation as a product of discernable interior changes in favor of portraying alterations in behavior resulting from an actor critiquing his or her own moral performance. Because of this shift in emphasis, the tragicomic-romance troubles ethical justifications based on the expression of interior states while simultaneously reinforcing the efficacy of theatrical ritual. Stated differently, although *The Winter's Tale*

interrogates the “authenticity” of Leontes’ motivations, this lack of closure only underscores how dramatic artifice ensures the play’s comedic ending. As the romance ends, while audiences may have warrantable doubts about Leontes’ integrity, they have little cause to question his receptivity to dramatic persuasion.

III: Ariel’s Speaking Picture

More overtly than *The Winter’s Tale*, *The Tempest’s* representation of oratory and theatrical artifice takes place amid a crisis of authority, an interrogation of political legitimacy exemplified by the repetition of usurpations and attempted usurpations that structure the play’s plot and its prehistory. In the romance’s opening scene, the danger wrought by Prospero’s storm reveals hierarchy to be a social construction, a creation whose efficacy has contextual limitations. The boatswain’s question to Gonzalo, “What care these roarers for the name of king” (1.1.15-6), haunts all five acts of the play. Responding to the spirit underlying this question, Prospero represents himself as an enlightened humanist ruler unjustly deposed by his wicked brother, but the information provided to the audience about his reign muddies this legitimizing narrative. Explaining his past, Prospero boasts that he was reputed “for the liberal arts / Without a parallel” (1.2.73-4) while also admitting that instead of ruling wisely, he neglected “worldly ends, all dedicated/ To closeness and bettering of my mind” (1.2.89-90). As many commentators have noted, Prospero, a bad humanist, reverses the ideal of *vita activa* by using his public position as a foundation for the contemplative life.²¹⁶ Still, like any proponent of the liberal arts, he uses eloquence to achieve his goals. His recital of his history before Miranda, his pageant-like attempts to control the men and women around

him, all point to a kind of pedagogy, a manipulative, controlling, even domineering method of teaching. His lesson to Miranda repeats a variation of "mark me" or "obey me" seven times in just over a hundred lines (1.2.56-185). His relations with servants are likewise fraught not only with abusive language but with the threat of violence.

Caliban's presence proves particularly irksome. Miranda and her father both depend upon his labor for survival, but the monster-servant's protestations present a counter-narrative to Prospero's attempts to extol his right to rule. Caliban portrays Prospero as another usurper, one in a long line of figures to illegitimately dominate the island. More than that, the monster asserts ownership over the island for himself, a claim based on his descent from his mother, Sycorax. The articulation of this narrative within the play does not imply audiences should entirely accept Caliban's claims or that *The Tempest* depicts him as a noble figure; Caliban inadvertently confesses that his mother only assumed ruler-ship after having been banished from Algiers. A colonizer herself, Sycorax's history exactly parallels Prospero's: both magic-users conquered the island after having been banished from their homeland, and both used coercion to control the island's original inhabitants. Caliban's claims have the advantage of precedence, but the play does not portray this argument as any more valid than Prospero's humanist justifications. Instead of validating either claim, *The Tempest* muddies the difference between the various usurpers. The romance's web-like network of parallelisms ironize pretensions to right of rule. In the end, only Prospero's decision to give up the island separates magician from witch.

Ariel, a figure with a stronger claim to priority on the island than either Sycorax or Prospero, poses a different set of challenges. Because of his apparent submission to

Prospero, traditional—i.e. humanist or romantic—readings of *The Tempest* tend to regard the spirit as an extension of his master, as either a quasi-allegoric or even an entirely allegoric representation of the imaginative faculty. This traditionalist reading defines Ariel as an attribute of Prospero. Recent postcolonial readings, on the other hand, define the spirit in opposition to the more overtly rebellious Caliban.²¹⁷ Ariel's actions throughout *The Tempest*, however, play a more determinative role in the tragicomedy's plot than either approach generally acknowledges. While not as obviously rebellious as Caliban, Ariel successfully influences Prospero at key junctures. If the romance's conclusion gestures toward a measure of redemption, this is effected, not through the discourse of self-mastery that Prospero invokes to justify his control over the Island, nor through Caliban's activity, but through an acceptance of limitations engendered by Ariel's skillful manipulation of visual performance. Paralleling Paulina's use of theatrical manipulation to turn Leontes away from paranoia and toward repentance in *The Winter's Tale*, Ariel uses artifice to convince Prospero to eschew revenge and abdicate power. In many respects, Ariel's "speaking pictures" hold the plot of Shakespeare's romance together, dominating events and influencing characters. While the spirit diligently fulfills Prospero's commands, he also uses his songs and pageants to speak not just for Prospero but to him. His famous song to Ferdinand, for instance, one of the most familiar passages from the play, presents the prince with the image of his father's decaying corpse, convincing the young man that his father is dead, but the song also works to persuade Prospero, who is, after all, observing Ferdinand's reaction as an invisible spectator, to come to terms with the inevitability of his own eventual demise (1.2.399-405).

The wedding masque that Ariel stages as a demonstration of Prospero's abilities functions similarly. As Stephen Orgel long ago pointed out in a classic study, *The Tempest's* representation of the wedding masque moves through different seasons and ends with the threat of death in the form of Caliban's uprising.²¹⁸ Prospero intends to use this masque to restore order to the play-world, to facilitate an end to the disruption of hierarchy that has been ubiquitous throughout *The Tempest* since its first scene. The storm at sea, the storm rocking the ship of state, and the storm in Prospero's mind are all connected at this moment as the entertainment Prospero thinks he controls veers off course when it unexpectedly causes him to recognize his own mortality. Faced with Ferdinand and Miranda's disquieted response to his sudden eruption of anger, Prospero acknowledges his "vexed" mental state, asking Ferdinand to "Bear with my weakness. My old brain is troubled. / Be not disturbed with my infirmity" (4.1.160-163). The exiled Duke begins to realize that the control he exhibits over the external storm does not necessarily extend to his own internal tempest. More crucially, the masque inaugurates a conceptual shift. Prospero begins comforting Ferdinand by assuring the prince that what he witnessed was accomplished by "our actors," but eventually comes to include himself in the performance, transitioning from describing actors as something he owns to admitting that "We are such stuff / as dreams are made on" (4.1.156-7). In including himself as an actor in the world's theater, Prospero begins to evaluate his own ethical role-playing through the *theatrum mundi* analogy.

With his master reflecting on his moral performance, Ariel brings the image of the innocent but distressed Gonzalo before Prospero's already vexed inward sense: "His tears run down his beard like winter's drops / From eaves of reeds. Your charm so strongly

works 'em / That if you now beheld them, your affections / Would become tender"

(5.1.20-5). Ariel's *enargeiac* language ironically succeeds in allowing Prospero to behold Gonzalo, performing the very feat discussed only in the subjunctive sense. The references to the councilor's beard, the wintry mix of his tears, and the comparison between his face and a reed roof, all calculatingly highlight the age and fragility of the man Prospero recognizes as saving both his and Miranda's life after Antonio's coup. When Prospero inquires whether Ariel sincerely believes his passions would be triggered by the sight of the enchanted Gonzalo, the spirit replies, "Mine would, sir, were I human" (5.1.26). The spirit's qualification forces Prospero to evaluate his actions from the standpoint of the human community; to do otherwise would be to undermine the distinction between spirit and human, servant and master, that justifies the wizard's rule in the first place.

Prospero's positive response, "And mine shall," pointedly acknowledges the power of Ariel's discourse. As Leah Whittington notes, by "Ventriloquizing the suffering of the Italian lords, and making them into independent epicenters of feeling, Ariel is given a...voice to stir Prospero's compassion. Thorough Ariel's mediation, Prospero comes near to the point of identification with his enemies."²¹⁹ More than a representation of persuasion, this penultimate exchange between Prospero and Ariel serves as *The Tempest's* denouement. Prospero announces his preference for forgiveness over revenge (5.1.34-7) and then "abjures" his magic in a long monologue imitating Ovid's Medea, the recounting of his otherworldly feats acting as an exorcism of the specter that has loomed over his character since Act One: the possibility of becoming another Sycorax (5.1.42-67). Including the romance's epilogue, the final moments of the play enact a final attempt

at performing forgiveness and reconciliation, a performance which, while not entirely convincing, serves as a last embrace of the *theatrum mundi* commonplace.

In the end, Prospero condemns and forgives his traitorous brother in one breath, an unconvincing staging of reconciliation. Antonio, for his part, only responds to his brother's efforts with an uncomfortable silence. The problems of authority and legitimation that *The Tempest* foregrounds remain unsolved by the play's conclusion. As Harry Berger observes, Prospero wants to narrate a story about redemption and forgiveness, and all the elements for this story are in place, but the play can just as easily be read as being about a lack of empathy and reconciliation.²²⁰ Far from masterminding and controlling the events of *The Tempest* like a playwright orchestrating a drama, the wizard loses control of his *inventio*. Prospero attempts to stage a courtly pageant as a reaffirmation of his power and status, but Ariel converts this into something decidedly more popular, achieving his goals through the application of a set of persuasive practices closely aligned both with commercial theater and with a romance tradition famous for incorporating smaller texts, such as songs, lyric poems, digressive stories, and *ekphrastic* descriptions, within a larger narrative.

IV: Romance, Interiority, and the Performance of Power

Shakespeare's late romances, then, depict the *theatrum mundi* commonplace encouraging ethical evaluation, but the knowing fictionality of *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*, the artificiality of the invention displayed, also point toward the unnaturalness of social formations as portrayed in these plays. These texts problematize interiority, moving beyond the examination of individual subjectivities into something considerably broader, something more performative and less directly connected with the emergence of the

liberal subject than descriptions of Shakespearean interiority often allow for. Victoria Kahn has recently shown that early modern writers could conceptualize political and legal theories as profoundly similar to poetics. Certain sixteenth- and seventeenth-century intellectuals turned away from essentialist validations for authority—from transcendental justifications of the state—in favor of an epistemic and ontological break, one more radical than the later (more decisive) rupture from older forms of legitimation made in the eighteenth century.²²¹ Kahn describes this break, manifested among other places in the contract theory of Hobbes and the creative power to shape experience modeled in Machiavelli, as a linguistic turn toward understanding social formations as *poiesis*, a form of “making” with the power to bring new social artifacts into existence.²²² This rupture lacked the staying power of the eighteenth-century enlightenment, but persisted as a point of contention, becoming relevant again, according to Kahn, because of the current crisis in liberalism.²²³ One argument made in this chapter is that *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*, in reworking of the *theatrum mundi* commonplace, participate in this early modern break from forms of legitimation which rationalize social structures as “natural” or divinely inspired. At the same time, the equivocality of the motions toward reformation made by Leontes and Prospero partially arises because the fantasy enacted in each romance fails to truly settle the problems of the play-world, problems resulting from patriarchal authority, class exploitation, and from the competing demands of society. Modeling ethicality and sovereignty as a form of performance creates room to reconceptualize and even interrogate conditions, but this depiction offers no obvious solution to conflict beyond the conceptual power of performative evaluation and the transformative sway of theatrical influence.

That, however, serves as the *scope*, to return to a term favored by both Sidney and Alday, of Shakespeare's late turn to tragicomic-romance. Both *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* portray popular drama, embodied in theatrical devices and the conventions of romance, as a force which facilitates evenhanded and efficacious exchanges between socially unequal speakers and auditors. These tragicomic-romances draw upon a cultural stratification which identified a receptivity to romance with nonelite audiences—with women, servants, the uneducated, and the young.²²⁴ Even *The Winter's Tale's* title suggests an association with women and with popular culture: a "winter's tale" being effectively synonymous with "old wives' tale." Yet, however ostensibly popular, both tragicomic-romances are careful not to ostracize elites. These plays were probably first performed in the Blackfriars theater, the King's Men's winter playhouse, which based on its prices—sixpence for an inexpensive seat—catered to audiences of a higher social class than those that frequented the Globe.²²⁵ Simon Forman's diary, conversely, records a performance of *The Winter's Tale* at the larger venue on May 15th 1611.²²⁶ Although no record of its performance exists, the metatheatrical allusions to the popular theater's shape strongly suggest that *The Tempest*, too, was staged at the Globe.²²⁷ Apart from these performances, both tragicomic-romances were performed for the Court at Whitehall during the festivities for Princess Elizabeth's marriage to Frederick V of the Palatine in 1613.²²⁸ Located in an increasingly cosmopolitan city, at a time of increasing social mobility, and catering to a heterogeneous audience, Shakespeare's plays appealed to men and woman from all the social strata—a spectrum which included everyone from nobility to merchants, from housewives to lawyers, and from royalty to servants. As seen in antitheatrical discourse, this position as a space in which classes and genders mingled

created a stigma depriving playacting of cultural prestige. Antithetically, this peripheral situation also afforded possibilities, opportunities for identification which Shakespeare's theater fully exploited.

CHAPTER 4

“NOT MUCH TO BE MARKED, AND LESS RESISTED”: MARY WROTH’S URANIA, ORDINARY SPEECH, AND THE END OF EARLY MODERN ROMANCE

Although it has not been much remarked upon, the representation of oratory stands among the earliest generic conventions disrupted in Mary Wroth’s *Urania*. This dissertation has shown that English romances following Sidney portray oratory as inefficacious, morally dubious, or as both inefficacious and morally dubious. While portraying oratory negatively, Sidnean romance simultaneously models poetic discourse successfully mediating between characters of different statuses and genders. I now want to suggest that *The Countess of Montgomery’s Urania* breaks this pattern by portraying particular forms of persuasion as both ethical and effective. This upending of convention becomes evident in the text’s opening tableau when Urania, the romance’s eponymous heroine, counsels the beleaguered Perissus to abandon despair and attempt to rescue his mistress, Limena, from her abusive and tyrannical husband, Philargus. Before the events of the narrative, Perissus and Limena had fallen into a chaste love, a relationship which remained unconsummated due to the presence of Philargus. Unfortunately, Philargus grew suspicious of his wife and—with Perissus off fighting in a military campaign—tortured her, attempting to force Limena to betray her lover while also threatening the princess with death. Desperate to limit the harm caused by Philargus’ wraith, Limena clandestinely composed and sent a letter to Perissus alerting him to her impending demise and requesting that he not seek revenge for her murder, a request he fulfilled by retreating into the cave-like hermitage where Urania discovers him lamenting his misfortune. Upon hearing his tale of woe, Urania devises a complex argument based upon the possibility of

Limena still being alive and the necessity of avenging her if she has been murdered. Following Urania's counsel, Perissus will ultimately rescue his, very much alive, mistress. Significantly, in a romance marked by betrayal and infidelity, Perissus and Limena will go on to have one of the few stable and happy marriages within the text.

This positive representation of persuasion establishes the *Urania* as a new kind of romance, one with a different relationship to rhetoric than the previous works discussed in this dissertation. Unlike Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, or Shakespeare's late tragicomic-romances, Wroth's *Urania* does not contrast oratory with poetic conceits in order to justify or legitimate fiction. Instead of making an argument about poetics and rhetoric, Wroth highlights discourses which efficaciously bridge the chasm between personal expression and public utility.²²⁹ Suggestively, Wroth opens her romance with an affirmative display of aristocratic, female eloquence; she begins the *Urania* by modeling a noblewoman successfully intervening in an ethical controversy containing both personal and public dimensions. More precisely, Urania's language convinces Perissus to resume the active life, the *vita active*, the traditional goal of humanist persuasion. Yet while the text clearly juxtaposes Perissus' initial malaise with the ideal of *vita active*, answering the question of how Urania's discourse fits into humanist conceptions of eloquence poses a set of difficulties which will occupy my argument throughout most of this chapter. The heroine's speech, while broadly recognizable as deliberative oratory—in the sense that she persuades someone to take an action—bears little resemblance to many of the traditional canons of classical rhetoric. While Urania uses *inventio* to create a series of proofs to convince Perissus, deploying tropes and figures to bolster the efficacy of her argument, she does not structure her

“oration” to conform to any kind of classical model. Even a Ramist conception of rhetoric, with its heavy emphasis on *elocutio*, would be too focused, too systematic and theoretical, to include this representation of oratory under its banner.²³⁰ Wroth, of course, knew rhetorical conventions and the proper structure for an oration. She grew up in Penshurst Place, an important center of learning, and was extraordinarily well-educated thanks to the services of a series of tutors.²³¹ Nevertheless, Urania’s speech to Perissus does not follow the usual precepts—for example, structuring a speech into the six parts of an oration as recommended in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.²³² Wroth instead depicts Urania as persuading Perissus using ordinary speech, non-technical language marked by clearness (*disertus*) and intelligence but which authorities such as Cicero had characterized as distinct from “true” eloquence.²³³ As a concept described by its contrast with persuasion as a system, providing an ostensive definition of this delimited form of argument can be difficult, but in general I follow the interlocuter Antonius in Cicero’s *De Oratore* by using the term as a form of everyday praxis devoid of theoretical justifications. Placed back in the context of Wroth’s narrative, the casualness of the romance’s representation of oratory ensures that Urania’s intervention does not accrue authority for rhetorical theory, or even for a form of rhetorical-poetics. Instead of accruing authority for either rhetoric or poetry, the romance localizes the effect created by this portrayal, encouraging readers to accept the entrance of a female author of secular texts into the public space created by the circulation of fiction.

The medium of Urania’s delivery plays an important role in the romance’s representation of female ordinary speech; Wroth takes a significant risk in modeling discursive efficacy through direct interpersonal communication, a risk she turns to her

advantage. Authorities in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries frequently and disdainfully codified female writing as analogous to the female voice—and even to the female body. As Mary Ellen Lamb points out, “There is, in fact...evidence of the blurring of speaking and writing as distinct activities,” a perception of the physical presence of a text as linked to the physical presence of the author which “was probably possible only in a recently literate society in which writing still bore traces of orality.”²³⁴ Far from distancing the *Urania* from the body of its author, however, this representation of persuasion embraces the connection between the circulation of romance and the perception of the female voice. The *Urania*, in this section of its narrative, executes a reversal within the network of associations which generally limited expressive possibility for early modern women. Extending and enlarging the *loci* available for female discourse, the success of Wroth’s portrayal of Urania’s persuasion relies on a troika of ordinary speech, gendered embodiment, and a manipulation of romance convention, all of which will be traced throughout the course of this chapter.

As the following sections will show, Wroth’s depiction of successful ordinary speech contests the traditional connection between efficacious discourse and moral “virtue,” a quality traditionally codified as a civic expression of masculinity, something Wroth embodies throughout this episode, although in very different forms, through both Perissus and Philargus. The representation of Urania’s speech to Perissus responds to and critiques the fantasy—traced throughout this dissertation—of poetry allowing ethical exchanges across the social strata. But rather than entirely undermining the idea of a form of language capable of mediating between speakers of different genders and ranks, Wroth creates a permutation on Sidnean rhetorical-poetics, substituting an argument about poetic

efficacy for something both more localized and centered on narrative. The exchange between Urania and Perissus does not accrue authority for women, as a category, to enter into public discourse; instead of opening a door, this moment cracks it ajar slightly, just wide enough to allow particular figures to enter. Urania, according to the logic of this episode, can speak to Perissus because of her personal excellencies, naturalized, although with a tincture of irony, as inherent to members of her place in the social hierarchy. This restriction limits the feminist potential of this subversion by failing to make an argument for female capacity *in toto*. Instead of making an argument about the worth of female speech as a class, this constraint represents persuasion's efficacy as contingent upon circumstances, the ethos of a speaker, and the ability to take advantage of the determinative opportunity offered by the propriety of a given moment, the *kairos* of the instant.²³⁵ While Wroth does not blatantly advocate for female equality, in rejecting high ideals, she still presents a pragmatic model of efficacious exchange in specific circumstances between speakers of different genders.

This persuasive strategy pushes outward, creating an opening for forms of elite female discourse. Yet, although privileged and contingent, the public, civically-oriented nature of Urania's intervention challenges the notion that Wroth figures the preconditions of female authorship as a contained space. Arguments about self-reflexivity abound throughout Wroth scholarship, but these readings generally assume a model of female authorship focused on private spaces, emblematic locations allowing discursively rich but politically circumscribed expressions of female interiority. Concentrating on Pamphilia, often identified as an exact surrogate for Wroth, twentieth- and twenty-first century readers have looked toward the locked cabinet containing the heroine's poetry as emblematic of

the isolation of female writing from society.²³⁶ Conventionally seen, Philip Sidney models romance as political intervention; his niece, on the other hand, uses the genre to express subjective experiences. Bucking this tendency, I want to argue that Wroth, through the exchange between Urania and Perissus, manipulates and inverts familiar narrative patterns in romance in order to establish a social role for select forms of female discourse. Aside from broadening the scope of our understanding of Wroth's project, this focus on a Uranian political intervention pushes back against a gendered division figuring female authors and readers as concerned with emotional responses and masculine writers and audiences as concerned with more conventionally intellectual content, a form of marginalization which emerged in the early modern period and which still colors our reception both of romance and female discourse today. Wroth's exploration of convention repeatedly highlights how control over stories enables female speakers to enter into public discourse in order to promote the social good. The *Urania*, like the *Arcadia* and moments in Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*, models a form of exemplarity possessing social power.

The opening section of this chapter begins to trace this exemplarity by examining how both Perissus and Philargus serve as different embodiments of fallen virtue, paradigms of masculinity challenged by Urania's own personification of the chivalric ideal. My second section demonstrates how Urania's personification advocates for a form of liminality—closely associated with romance as a genre—which the text codifies as redemptive of erotic desire. I next explain how Urania's "ordinary speech" responds to the crises of the 1620s, how informal persuasion in the *Urania* bridges private expression and political action. This chapter concludes by placing the opening of the *Urania* within the romance's larger representation of persuasion; in this final section, I argue that throughout

her text, Wroth links discursive efficacy with the ability to negotiate complex and potentially vexed social situations via the use of fictional or semi-fictional narratives, a claim based on Urania's persuasion and an example of narratological failure spoken by Pamphilia's rival, Antissia, much later in the text. I end my chapter by suggesting how Wroth's representation of social navigation as narrative anticipates elements of novelistic realism.

I: Perissus' Chauvinism and Urania's Embodiment

A concern with female communication and masculine prerogatives both foregrounds and forecloses Urania's encounter with Perissus. When the despairing lover first notices Urania intruding upon his hermitage, he disparages her due to her gender, first mistaking the woman for one of the furies and then, upon realizing her humanity, dismissing the shepherdess. "Now I see you are a woman," he tells her when she asks about his sorrow, "and therefore not much to be marked, and lesse resisted" (4.27-28).²³⁷ Seen against the circumstances of his adversity, a situation caused by Philargus' distrust of women and by a dynastic conception of marriage which forbids Limena from pursuing the object of her desire, Perissus' casual misogyny ultimately implicates him in his own misfortune. More crucially, when Perissus initially belittles Urania for daring to speak, the moment emblematically raises questions about the decorum of a female author publishing a secular work of literature. Perissus, at this juncture, simulates readers skeptical or hostile to the *Urania* itself. Faced with a woman intruding upon a male space and making an unsolicited statement, the knight articulates an objection to the propriety of female language-use, one which clearly has resonances extending toward Wroth's own

circulation of her romance and even toward her entering the world of print. If Perissus expresses a sentiment hostile to the possibility of female authorship, Urania's response, in turn, serves as a *refutatio* countering this objection.

Urania, instead of outright challenging Perissus' characterization of her unworthiness, builds a bridge to the Sicilian prince by telling him of her own distress stemming from her lack of knowledge about the identity of her biological parents (4.35-42). Explaining to Perissus that she herself entered the hermitage to find ease in solitariness establishes her ethos as someone who has also experienced troubles, a construction which enables the knight to look past his misgivings about Urania's gender. Met with this adaptation, Perissus explicitly rationalizes his decision to tell his tale of woe based upon this shared affinity between speaker and listener: "because you are, or seem to be afflicted, I will not refuse to satisfie your demaund" (5.2-3). Urania's gesture sets the pattern for what follows while also revealing the limitations of this approach. Modeling a responsiveness to circumstances, she quickly evaluates Perissus' character and then invents a strategy which would appeal to his person. Her pragmatic response creates the opportunity to persuade the prince but does not substantially alter his opinion about female worthiness. Even after accepting the soundness of Urania's advice, he attributes her level-headedness to her class position: "too much judgement I finde in you, to be directly, as you seem, a mere Shepherdesse, nor is that beauty sutable to that apparell" (16.1-3). Upon learning that Urania does not know her lineage, Perissus responds by exclaiming, "This doe I well credit...for more like a Princesse, then a Shepherdesse doe you appeare, and so much doe I reverence your wisdome" (16.11-13). Perissus' statements only superficially contradict each other: Urania *seems* "like a mere

Shepherdess" but she *appears* "like a Princesse." The knight, however, refers in the first statement to Urania's apparel and in the second to the quality of her mind. Urania's beauty and speech validate her persuasive acts; for Perissus, they alter the propriety of a woman advising a man to take a particular course of action. By accommodating her speech toward her audience, Urania persuades *despite* his manifest chauvinism.

In tandem with selecting proofs which directly address the knight's situation and character, Urania also encourages the Sicilian by manipulating the chivalric conventions of romance which the despairing lover has internalized. Perissus' stagnation results from his adherence to a code of conduct which requires him to obey his mistress, whom the knight describes as the "Commandresse of my soule" (14.13). Throughout the narration of his unhappy love, Perissus adopts the analogy comparing lovers to "servants," a familiar comparison which has obvious sexual connotations but also points toward a genuine obligation to adhere to commands. Against this, Urania points to the imperative from the same chivalric tradition to perform great acts, feats of arms fought in honor of a beloved yet expressive of masculine virtue. Urania repeatedly genders Perissus' inactivity, even codifying his protestations of woe as "woman-like complaints." This description of Perissus' lamentations does not necessarily prove that Urania accepts the knight's judgements about her gender; Urania's attitude at this moment is subtly but recognizably performative. To affect her audience, she becomes a mirror modeling Perissus' ethos back to the forlorn prince, an example both of *prosopopoeia*, the imitation of a personage, and *ethopoeia*, the impersonation of character. Referring to Perissus' honor, virtue, judgment, and discretion, she claims that "these [qualities] invite me, as from your self, to speake for your selfe" (15.16-7). In reflecting Perissus' principles and

prejudices back toward him, Urania stresses martial valor over obedience. According to Urania, the knight's retreat from the world is in "no way befitting the valiant Perissus, but like a brave Prince, if you know shee bee dead, revenge her death on her murderers; and after, if you will celibrate her funeralls with your owne life giving, that will be a famous act: so may you gain perpetuall glorie, and repay the honor to her dead, which could not bee but touched by her untimely end" (15.18-22). Urania calls Perissus to fulfill the masculine role he clearly identifies with; literally she calls him to rededicate his life to glory through feats of arms in honor of his beloved; more abstractly and less explicitly, she calls him to act as a figure of romance. Urania's *ethopoeia* becomes a form of exemplification in which the heroine uses her imitation not to perform as a man but to figuratively embody a masculine ideal. Deeply affected, Perissus responds positively to Urania's idealized impersonation of his own self-image. Once Urania further reconciles his desire for glory with his obligation to fulfill Limena's command by surmising, with probable correctness, that Limena only requested he not attempt to avenge her out of a concern for his safety, he springs into action (15.29-40).

The text portrays Perissus' recommitment to the chivalric code as a return to the active life. In his own words, "I againe put on those habites which of late I abandoned" (15.41-2). He then retrieves his armor, an emblem of masculine fortitude which he had left outside his cave hanging on a large holly tree, his resumption of his "habites" becoming physically embodied in steel, shield, and weapons. The *Urania* complicates this reassertion of masculine prerogative by having Perissus ascribe his activity to Urania's agency. Referring to the power of Urania's mind and argumentation, he asks, "Is Perissus the second time conquer'd?" before concluding that "I must obey that reason

which abounds in you; and to you, shall the glory of this attempt now belong” (15.39-41). This admission blurs the line between the efficacy of physical action and female speech. Urania’s “reason,” in a sense, becomes the *cause efficient* of chivalric action. More than that, much later in the romance, upon Limena’s liberation from Philargus’ tyranny, this narrative thread concludes in a second exhibition of female discourse, another example of female reasoning: Limena completes the narration which Perissus had only initiated with Urania, explaining to her beloved (and to the *Urania*’s readers) the events that befell her after the conclusion of Perissus’ tale (87.18-88.34). Limena, ultimately, has the final say. As Helen Hacket points out, “Limena’s...victory over Philargus is perhaps most marked by the fact that the episode ends with her voice, with her telling her own story.”²³⁸ In this case, the *Urania*’s portrayal of the active life cohabitates with and provides a space for Urania and Limena to gain a measure of control over the description of their lived experience.

The *Urania* achieves this cohabitation through a complex web of mediations, networks linking knightly accoutrements to the language spoken by female characters. As already alluded to, Perissus’ armor mediates between the prince and the outside world; he cannot resume his previous “habits” without first donning the coverings which protect his body and allow him to navigate a maze of dangerous social and martial situations. Perissus’ armor, in short, enables his private person to participate in public events. In a text marked with the threat of violence against female bodies—Philargus’ torture of Limena, for example—language develops into a tool which has a broadly similar use for well-speaking women. As Hackett observes, “narrative in the *Urania*...is a medium which lies between public and private, because it involves the representation of personal

experience to an audience.”²³⁹ This mediation, however, goes beyond the depiction of human psychology; like Perissus’ armor, it allows Urania and Limena to act publicly and to influence the men and women surrounding them without directly exposing their persons to hazard.

In any case, the representation of and focus on female interiority, although often associated with the *Urania*, is hardly confined to Wroth’s permutation on romance. Helen Cooper, among many other scholars of the genre, has traced a focus throughout medieval and Renaissance romance on female subjectivity, a concern for women’s interiority linked to “the awakening of their sexuality.”²⁴⁰ The tradition in English romance inaugurated by the *Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia* further increased this emphasis, both through Sidney’s representation of Pamela and Philoclea and, in Mary Ellen Lamb’s words, “by privileging a woman as its reader...its very title bestow[ing] a position as subject to a woman.”²⁴¹ As Cooper points out, throughout romance’s history as a genre, “women’s sexuality is centrally regraded as positive, to the point where it is one of the key factors that enables the restoration of social and providential order.”²⁴² This restoration, however, is conventionally effected through male activity inspired by desire for a beloved. In this long-established formulation, women serve as agents but not particularly forceful ones.

The *Urania* transforms this pattern by substituting the passive desire for a female lover for the active impetus of female “reason,” a term which broadly suggests force of argumentation but more narrowly hints at Urania’s deployment of logos as a proof. Even Perissus comes close to acknowledging this substitution when he links Urania to Limena. “So much doe I reverence your wisdom,” he tells the heroine, that “as next unto Limena,

I will still most honor you” (16.12-13). He then makes a vow to pursue Philargus, swearing upon Urania’s person as though she were indeed his beloved (16.14-16). Traditionally composed by men but strongly associated with a female audience,²⁴³ romances—especially instances of the genre descended from Arthurian legend and the *chansons de gestes* tradition—move between representations of socially permissible, masculine violence and portrayals of both male and female interiorities.²⁴⁴ Wroth’s depiction of Urania’s persuasion operates within the spaces created by this inheritance, taking advantage of romance’s alternation between and codification of masculine and feminine ethos. Performing as Perissus’ better self, at once both male and female, Urania textually inhabits romance conventions to participate in the humanist project of deliberating on how men and women should live and act in the world.

II: The *Urania* on the Boundary

Urania’s impersonation of the chivalric ideal fits into a pattern featured throughout Limena’s narrative, a focus on liminality, a fixation on the way that thresholds and mixed states enable desiring subjects to push against social conventions. This emphasis on liminality becomes a form of resistance codified in the text as moral and even redemptive. Initially, Perissus’ cave serves as a liminal area, something between a private room and the wilds of the island. Within the confines of this hermitage, identities shift and fluctuate. At first, the *Urania* portrays this vacillation in identity as threatening. As the romance opens, with her origins occluded, Urania finds herself in a full-blown crisis in self-conception as she enters the cave. Confronted with Limena’s potential demise, Perissus’ self-concept, both as a warrior and a lover, had earlier collapsed, resulting in his

initial stagnation. More than any other figure in the text, Limena, whose name etymologically connects her to the concept, evokes identity at a threshold; caught between love for Perissus and duty to Philargus, her situation dramatizes a split produced by the demands of gendered expectation and personal desire.²⁴⁵ In a conceptually capacious sense, the whole episode associates liminality in identity with social strain. But if one form of liminality results from conflict, another resolves it. The romance represents Urania's verbal hybridity, her personification of aretaic striving for fame and praise, as productive. As she persuades Perissus, Urania convinces her audience by assuming a textual role conventionally understood as at odds with her gender.

To some extent, this liminality reflects Wroth's own position as an author; her text's representation of persuasion acknowledges and accepts the charges of hybridity and hermaphroditism that critics would inevitably level at any woman circulating a self-authored secular text. But the text transforms these potential attacks into something desirable, making disadvantage into advantage, deficit into virtue. This circuitous approach evidently appealed to readers and writers of female-authored romances, especially those written in imitation of Sidney: Mary Wroth was far from the only female author of romance in the seventeenth century to adopt this stance. The paratextual materials prefacing Anna Weamys' *Continuation of Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia*, for instance, returned to the invention of authorial hermaphroditism as late as 1651. In a prefatory dedicatory poem, an unknown author, "Mistress F.W.," justifies Weamy's daring to complete Sidney's fragment with a conceit explaining how Sidney's spirit, through "metempsychosis," coupled with Weamys' body and mind in order to complete his unfinished text. Sidney, according to F.W., "*breathes through Female Organs, yet*

*retains / His masculine vigour in Heroick strains. / Who hears't may some Amazon seem to be / Not Mars but Mercury's Champion, Zelmane.*²⁴⁶ F.W's comparison between Sidney's coupling with Weamys and Pyrocles' crossdressing as Zelmane tactfully ignores the moral ambiguity of the *Arcadia's* representation of gender performance. Her conceit illustrates how certain narrative conventions from pastoral and heroic romance blur gendered expectations; these conventions, while often problematic, could create a space for female discourse in the right conditions, a set of circumstances personified in Urania's attempt to embody the chivalric ethos for the benefit of the public good.²⁴⁷

Significantly, the focus on female speech constructively deliberating on both public and private affairs justifies drawing upon the events of Wroth's milieu and from contemporary political incident. The *Urania's* emphasis on the active life points toward the romance's function as a piece of persuasive writing, an underlining which calls into question readings that see Wroth's text only as a kind of proto-roman à clef or as a stepping stone toward the novelistic representation of interior states.²⁴⁸ As my conclusion will show, the *Urania* unquestionably contains novelistic elements. Descriptions of the *Urania* as a roman à clef likewise have validity; the romance obviously overlays real life with fiction: even Limena's and Perissus' relationship functions as a happy mirror to Wroth's own affair with William Herbert, with the relationship between Pamphilia and Amphilanthus acting as a second, darker and more ambiguous reflection of this liaison. But Wroth does not use a façade of narrative as a screen for gossip, or even merely to express her own feelings about her life in a fiction; while the *Urania* subverts and warps many of the conventions of Sidnean romance, it still retains the genre's interest in exemplarity, in shaping the values held by readers, and in modeling certain forms of

social interaction as efficacious. Through its demonstration of successful female example, the portrayal of Urania's "hermaphroditical" persuasion of Perissus indirectly supports and even defends the *Urania's* own capacity to engage with events.²⁴⁹

The tactic, in hindsight, evidently failed. Despite this built-in defense of Wroth's liminality as an author, the circulation of the *Urania* still drew condemnation for its shadowing of contemporaries. Offended by the representation of Sirelius, whose fraught relationship with his daughter apparently resembled his own, Edward Denny, Baron of Waltham, satirized Wroth as a "Hermaphrodite in show, in deed a monster," a response which Denny justified by claiming that Sirelius' portrayal led to his slander at court.²⁵⁰ This attack does not unequivocally prove that Wroth's representation of *Urania's* discursive efficacy lacked actual rhetorical efficacy. Based on the exchange of letters between Wroth and Denny following the circulation of Denny's satire, it seems likely that the irate nobleman only encountered the portrayal of Sirelius via oral hearsay.²⁵¹ In this instance, Wroth's depiction of Urania's speech may have proved ineffective precisely because Denny never actually encountered it. Even after decades of scholarship on Wroth, the exact composition of the *Urania's* original audience remains unclear, but if the romance circulated before publication, it clearly did so only among a small cadre of Wroth's friends and family members. As Hannay points out, the first part of the "*Urania* may not have circulated even in manuscript before its 1621 publication, since no manuscripts are extant, and since Denny complains of oral, rather than written, identification to the court."²⁵² Even lacking a record of contemporary reader-response, the episode featuring Urania's persuasion can still be constructively read as Wroth anticipating a hostile response resembling Denny's ire.

Much more importantly, the moment suggests how Wroth intended her romance to influence readers. I have been pushing against a view which sees the *Urania* as a text mostly invested in representing female interiority in the manner of a *roman à clef*. Seen as a progenitor of this genre, Wroth uses the trappings of fantasy to shadow contemporary figures, representing characters as ciphers for historically existing personages. In this view of the *Urania*, knowledge of proper context acts as a kind of key for deciphering the text's allegories and correspondences. At the risk of understatement, the comparison between the *Urania* and a *roman à clef* has been neither erroneous nor unproductive: critics representing the romance in this fashion have explored female authorship in the early modern period; have highlighted Wroth's depiction of female interiority; and have outright created a space for the *Urania* in the literary canon. But the comparison has also accidentally reinscribed a gendered division inherited from the original reception of early modern romance, a division which I think Wroth's text works to undermine. When sixteenth- and seventeenth-century readers gendered romance, they associated female audiences with the expression of sexuality, often creating a binary in which male readers read for political insight, rhetorical expressiveness, and philosophical concerns whereas female audiences read for titillation and escapism. As Lamb explains, "when men were described as reading Sidney's *Arcadia*, it was usually described as a work replete with political or moral precepts; when read by women, however, it was represented as dangerously...sexual."²⁵³ Limiting Sidney's successor, Mary Wroth, to the representation of desiring subjectivity extends early modern prejudices against romance's supposedly feminine audiences to Wroth as an author, an extension which creates an inadvertent resemblance between the reading practices of twenty-first century readers and

Edward Denny. Seen within the tradition of Sidnean exemplarity, however, Wroth's depiction of illicit yet redemptive extramarital love has both deliberative and *epideictic* elements. By interrogating the mores and values underlying male and female relationships, by exploring the psychological burdens created by dynastic marriages, and by portraying masculine possessiveness as destructive, the *Urania's* modeling of desire outside the confines of marriage invites readers to consider alternatives to the restraints imposed by traditions and institutions. Spoken by a female character who shares her name with the title of Wroth's romance, the *Urania's* early—practically inaugurating—representation of successful ordinary speech anchors an ambitious authorial scope.

III: Ordinary Speech and Jacobean Politics

Referencing Cicero's *De Oratore*, I have been describing Urania's persuasion as a form of ordinary speech; I now want to define what I mean by this, explain why I think this designation is useful, and then contextualize Wroth's adaptation of ordinary speech within the *Urania's* political commitments. Although this section may at first seem to move far afield from my reading of Urania's interaction with Perissus, I intend this contextualization to demonstrate how the heroine's speech relates to Wroth's social context and toward a tradition of rhetorical-poetics the *Urania* both belongs to and challenges.

First of all, I do not claim that Wroth had Cicero's dialogue in mind when she wrote the exchange between Urania and Perissus. With that caveat acknowledged, Wroth indisputably had access to Cicero's text. The *Short Title Catalogue*, after all, records that editions of *De Oratore* were published in England as far back as 1573.²⁵⁴ Earlier versions

of the dialogue, of course, disseminated widely on the continent well before that date. The 1665 catalogue of the Sidney family library in Penshurst Place lists several editions of *De Oratore* in the family's possession, and although, in this instance, the catalogue does not provide dates of publication or purchase, the juvenile Mary Sidney almost certainly had access, not only to Cicero's treatise, but to a number of different versions of this ever-popular text.²⁵⁵ Used for educational purposes and commonly referenced, Wroth clearly knew the dialogue. Yet no direct evidence, textual or otherwise, suggests that *De Oratore* influenced the *Urania*. Instead of suggesting a direct line of descent, I point to Cicero's work, in part, because of its substantial authority within debates over the social significance of eloquence, and because Cicero's dialogue demonstrates the fluidity, the contested character, of rhetorical constructs within Wroth's period.²⁵⁶ The influence of *De Oratore* in humanist circles throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is, in fact, difficult to overstate. Intellectuals in the Tudor and Stuart eras commonly regarded Cicero's dialogue as central to the theorization of language, and in one fashion or another, whether directly or indirectly, depictions of discourse and persuasion in the period respond to or react against the arguments made by Crassus and Antonius, the two most important speakers within Cicero's dialogue.

The reception of *De Oratore*, unsurprisingly, significantly contributed to the Renaissance's understanding of poetry's potential to teach audiences.²⁵⁷ In E. Armstrong's words, the dialogue helped "enact a deeply rhetorical mode of thinking embedded in the practical or prudential reasoning of civic life."²⁵⁸ For humanists, the argument between Antonius' unsystematic version of rhetoric as practice and Crassus' presentation of eloquence as a cultural mode paralleled the debate over the scope of

poetry, and in some cases, even set the contours for this dispute. Cicero's dialogue unquestionably had currency in the precise humanist milieus important for Wroth's development. Prominently, members of the Sidney circle liberally used Ciceronian proofs as touchstones for determining the proper scope of poetics and eloquence, a pattern which includes Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesy*. Observing this influence on the Elizabethan and his immediate successors, E. Armstrong has attempted to establish that both Philip Sidney's and Edmund Spenser's poetics navigate the chasm between Antonius' conservative, delimited view of discourse and Crassus' more expansive view of eloquence as a foundational science with a tripartite duty to delight, move, and instruct. His recent monograph goes much further than I am willing to go in situating Sidney's and Spenser's self-reflexivity as direct responses to *De Oratore*, but I will admit that, as authors deeply invested in a poetics of efficacy, Sidney's and Spenser's writings unsurprisingly abound with inflections of Cicero's Crassus—even in moments when these authors do not directly reference or allude to the dialogue.²⁵⁹ At the very least, Cicero's authority throughout the period provides an important anchor into early modern conceptions of discursive efficacy.

De Oratore, understood in this context, contributed a vocabulary for differentiating between persuasive speech and true eloquence, and by extension, differentiating between poetry as a pleasant distraction and poetry as an "architectonic science"—all of which make the dialogue useful for discussing Wroth's representation of persuasion in the early moments of her romance. Wroth may not directly reference *De Oratore*, but the ancient text provides a useful—contextually plausible—lexicon for discussing the various gradations of early modern eloquence. In addition to placing

Wroth's depiction of ordinary speech within Renaissance controversies over rhetorical theory, I invoke *De Oratore* because Cicero's dialogue situates the *Urania* within a tradition of Sidnean rhetorical poetics often connected with early modern romance. The *Urania*'s engagement with this tradition, however, is far from uncomplicated, and the romance's portrayal of its eponymous heroine's oratory destabilizes a number of well-established narrative patterns centered on the effect of discourse between speakers of different genders which had become convention within romance after Sidney. Unlike her famous predecessors, Wroth's modeling of contingently efficacious discourse, her representation of Urania's impersonation of Perissus' ethos, invokes only to reverse the Crassus-like stance adopted by Scalinger, Sidney, Spenser, and others. And, as I have argued above, Wroth's depiction of successful female persuasion favors everyday praxis, embodied in Urania's responsiveness to circumstance, over theoretical eloquence. In the *Urania*, ordinary speech supports the active life, not the more orthodox Ciceronian ideal of "true eloquence."

Why should this be the case? I want to suggest that the *Urania*'s representation of oratory in this episode overturns convention because Wroth's erotic romance models a different set of fantasies from its immediate precursors, a set of fantasies unconnected either to the paragon debates or to a desire for a form of eloquence capable of accommodating audiences across the social strata. The *Urania* contains as many self-reflexive conceits as the other romances discussed in this dissertation, but unlike her predecessors, Wroth displays little interest in establishing an agonistic debate between poetry and oratory; in this moment of the *Urania*, the two branches of eloquence clearly support one another. As I have shown in previous chapters, Sidney, Spenser, and

Shakespeare center the agon between poetics and rhetoric around the question of which form of discourse most effectively and ethically mediates between speakers and auditors of different social statuses. The aftermath of the peasants' revolt in the *New Arcadia*, Artegall's debate with and murder of the Egalitarian Giant in Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*, and Shakespeare's late tragicomic-romances all take an "intersectional" approach to class and gender. When I make this claim, I am not implying that Renaissance-era texts acknowledge the interconnectivity of social categorization.²⁶⁰ Rather than making a statement about identity and marginalization, meta-poetic representations of oratory in romance after Sidney depict rhetoric failing to accommodate disparities between speakers and audiences of different classes, genders, and, at least in the case of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*, races.²⁶¹ At the same time, all of these texts model poetic conceits or devices facilitating exchanges between interlocutors of differing social statuses—with the actual audience of each text often, at least notionally, included within this dialogue. Within these romances, the capacity to address audiences of various distinctions becomes the scope of an "intersectional" poetics. Authors from Sidney's time to Shakespeare's modeled a form of poetry capable of addressing a heterogeneous audience, an audience often figured as containing auditors or readers with complex and multilayered identities. This fantasy operates according to a kind of cultural logic. In Sidney's, Spenser's, and Shakespeare's lifetimes, emerging colonialism, religious conflict in the wake of the Reformation and Counterreformation, various forms of economic transformation, and an increasingly diversified and globalized marketplace made the fantasy of a form of eloquence capable

of reaching across social strata highly attractive both to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century intellectuals and to the audiences which consumed their texts.

This episode of the *Urania*, however, exclusively focuses on conversation between male and female interlocutors in isolation from the other components of identity. This representational pattern is typical throughout Wroth's romance. With only a handful of exceptions, nearly every major character in the *Urania* is high born. Despite the genealogical connection between the *Arcadia* and the *Urania*, Wroth, writing between 1615 and the early 1620s, obviously exists within a different cultural context from her late Tudor-era uncle, a circumstance reflected in her representation of rhetorical exchange. The late-Jacobean political settlement encouraged a focus on interpersonal relationships, an emphasis on the proper response to figures who abuse their authority, and a concentration on the situation of gender roles within a well-defined—courtly and aristocratic—system of social dynamics.²⁶² To give an example of this tendency—one already alluded to in my introduction but worth reemphasizing due to its importance for this episode—the analogy between patriarch of family within a household and king as father within a state or commonwealth continuously hovers just beneath the surface of the *Urania*'s representation of female resistance to jealous husbands. This association occasionally becomes part of the text's manifest content in moments that directly or indirectly relate to James I or to the relations between rulers and subjects, a set of correlations and analogies, in this instance, expressed though Philargus and Limena.²⁶³

The *Urania*'s tendency to link poor husbands with evil or ineffective monarchs becomes especially evident as Wroth's text becomes self-reflexive or meta-poetic. Wroth comes close, in these self-reflexive moments, to inviting readers to consider the purposes

behind her shadowings of political circumstances. These tableaux call attention to the positions and stances modeled by the text as successful. The description of Urania's speech to Perissus not only prepares readers to accept the circulation of a female author's language, it provides a fantasy of a woman's ordinary speech resisting unjust authority. Viewed from within the author's cultural moment and literary lineage, Wroth's engagement with Jacobean politics parallels Sidney's engagement in the *Arcadia* with the issues raised by resistance theory during the late sixteenth century.²⁶⁴ Both authors use meta-poetic conceits to interrogate what a subject should do when confronted by a poor ruler or tyrant, or in the case of Wroth, a tyrannical or jealous husband.²⁶⁵ Sidney, however, carefully creates the tableau of a social contract frayed from within by rulers, subjects, aristocrats, and peasants all alike neglecting the obligations they owe to one another. Wroth, on the other hand, concentrates on a single social unit, extracting—except on the emblematic or symbolic level—the triangle between husband, wife, and lover from connections to larger communal markers.

A comparison between Sidney's and Wroth's handling of another well-worn pastoral convention further demonstrates the contrast between Arcadian and Uranian representations of class and discourse. In the *New Arcadia*, Sidney opens his romance with a depiction of a love triangle between two male shepherds, Strephon and Claius, and a shepherdess, Urania. The departure of the object of the shepherds' desire (Urania herself never directly appears in the text) occasions a discursive and symbolic ascension in Strephon and Claius. Facing Urania's absence, the two suitors adopt the stance of the Petrarchan lover, complete with the use of neo-platonic conceits and the suggestion that love has provided access to a higher reality which enables the two rustics to express their

desire in a supra-refined, eloquent, and complex literary style.²⁶⁶ The presence of Petrarchan and Platonic conceits in the mouths of shepherds would seem like convention, if only Sidney followed his predecessors in making Strephon and Clais hidden royalty. Instead of following precedent, Sidney subverts expectations by having authentic rustics use language conventionally seen as decorous only for gentlepeople and aristocrats.²⁶⁷ In the *New Arcadia*, encountering *eros* allows pastoral suitors to assume verbal markers characteristic of members of a higher class. Tellingly, desire and love, the same forces that power Strephon's and Claius' ascension, also prompt Pyrocles and Musidorus to perform, respectively, as a woman and a shepherd. The *Arcadia*, almost systematically, interrogates the often-permeable border between status and discourse. In Sidney's wake, this interrogation becomes a feature of self-reflexive romance. When contrasted to Sidney's and his imitators' intense focus on crossing social boundaries, Wroth's exclusion of lower-class characters from the *Urania*, her return to disguising lost aristocrats as lovelorn rustics, seems like a premeditated and calculated response to generic reversals executed by her uncle and precursor.

But Wroth's bracketing of class and hierarchy also demonstrates the author's use of chivalric motifs to address concerns specific to her own class and gender at her particular historical juncture.²⁶⁸ This moment echoes both Wroth's personal circumstances and an increasingly unstable set of conditions associated with James I's court: the fact that the *Urania* does not depict class does not mean the text aims at escapism. Despite the romance's apolitical reputation, the *Urania* directly intervenes in several political debates, often with an explicitness surpassing Sidney's in the *New Arcadia*. In particular, *Urania*'s merging of the chivalric conventions of romance with the

humanist concern for praxis, the heroine encouraging the enervated Perissus to return to the active life, intersects with several of the commonplaces used by subjects who urged James I to adopt a more muscular foreign policy in protection of Continental Protestantism. In a long-ago study, Francis Yates charted how Protestant authors responded to the 1613 marriage between Fredrick V—Count Palatine of the Rhine—and Elizabeth Stuart—James I’s daughter—with an outpouring of courtly entertainments and emblematic literature centered around chivalric motifs.²⁶⁹ The events of the next several years following the royal wedding, however, changed these celebrations first into cries of mourning and then into calls to action on behalf of a union which had become a focal point for Protestant hopes on the Continent. After Protestants in Bohemia rebelled against their devoutly Catholic ruler, Ferdinand, Frederick assumed the crown of Bohemia without consulting his father-in-law on the English throne. Fredrick and Elizbeth were crowned as King and Queen of Bohemia in early November of 1619, destabilizing the balance of power established by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, only to be themselves expelled by Catholic imperial forces in November of the following year—a chain of events which, of course, famously set off the Thirty Years War and earned Fredrick and Elizabeth the sobriquet of “The Winter King and Queen of Bohemia.” The cautious and pragmatic James choose not to involve Scotland and England in the ensuing conflict, saving his kingdoms an expense of blood and treasure while also causing chagrin among Protestant factions hoping England would play a greater role in central Europe.²⁷⁰

Faced with Fredrick’s failure and James’ unwillingness to act, Wroth constructed a narrative which Josephine Roberts describes as “a countermyth within the *Urania*,” the romance’s description of Amphilanthus’ creation of an international coalition, a group of

allies assembled after the Prince of Naples was offered the title of “King of the Romans.”²⁷¹ This later episode depicting Amphilanthus’ diplomatic maneuvering clearly comments on the Thirty Years War; the depiction of Urania’s eloquence, conversely, is more elliptical in its relation to topical events, but the fantasy of an initially inactive ruler prompted to defend a loved one’s rights after receiving good counsel probably resonated strongly in courtly circles still smarting from the events of 1620—a milieu which remained deeply invested in a monarchy grounded in the consent of magistrates and advisors despite any discontent with James.²⁷²

Beyond the Bohemian controversy, the *Urania*’s original readers likely recognized the depiction of Perissus’ revival as related to a host of urgent contemporary issues and political crises. Although varied in subject matter and importance, all of this moment’s historical echoes connect in one way or another to James’ personality and governance. Like the resonances linking Perissus’ and James’ inactivity, the *Urania*’s depiction of efficacious female counsel reflects—and even perhaps responds to—both the exclusion of women from court after Queen Anne’s death in 1619 and the increasing realization by members of Wroth’s station of how little James valued parliament and the advice of his councilors: Wroth wrote the first half of the *Urania* in a decade in which James essentially ruled the English government alone.²⁷³ Perissus’ willingness to eventually heed Urania’s counsel establishes his justness as a ruler, his effectiveness as a military figure, and his worthiness for Limena’s hand. It would be a step too far to claim that, through Perissus, Wroth expresses her hope for James and his successors. Aspects of the fictional king nevertheless mirror and comment on the historical ruler and his legacy.

But the strongest resonances of this narrative, though political, are more theoretical than topical. The opening of the *Urania* turns upon the analogy between political and marital subjugation. As Mellissa Sanchez has shown, early modern authors often understood politics in sexual terms; in erotic romances after Sidney, analyses of desire double as examinations of power; the dividing line between the two reflections frequently blurs to the point of indistinction.²⁷⁴ Across the *Urania*, Wroth satirizes the convention of literary victims perversely enjoying the suffering imposed by their oppressors, the narratives of martyrdom exemplified in this episode both by Perissus and Limena but which can also be found in different forms throughout nearly the entirety of the romance. In Sanchez's words, "The First Episode of the *Urania* employs the discourse of martyrdom to offer an interpretive rubric for the erotic suffering that fills the romance."²⁷⁵ Seen in this light, Perissus' reception of Urania's speech plausibly models how to read the other narratives of erotic or familial subjugation found in the text. But I think we can go beyond describing this moment as an interpretive rubric. This depiction of reading not only models interpretation; it models a specific response, a pragmatic rejoinder to Perissus' initial inaction and Limena's acquiescence to her own subjugation. Wroth portrays a gendered permutation of ordinary speech having effects in the world.

All in all, this section of the *Urania* is as much invested in exploring how language and narratives constitute the world as in depicting the political dynamics of erotic or familial oppression. Perissus first speaks, acts, and justifies himself via the conventions of one narrative; Urania then persuades the prince using the conventions of a different, yet closely related, form of story. Both *narratio* and exemplification, in this instance, interrogate the correspondence between gender, virtue, and discourse.²⁷⁶

Urania, a woman, uses language to personify a masculine ideal. At the same time, she cuts away at the correlation between eloquence and masculinity, a correspondence as old as the representation of heroic eloquence in Homer. Even the famously urbane Cicero's many depictions of the rhetorician as cultural hero fit within an agonistic, restlessly competitive, conception of persuasion. Urania's informal persuasion removes rhetoric from this context: the framework of what Crassus in *De Oratore* refers to as "true eloquence."²⁷⁷ Yet Urania's persuasion still provides a paradigm for discourse making a political intervention, a differently gendered form of speech separate from conventional rhetorical *theory* which still *pragmatically* influences audiences. Unlike the troublesome representations of oratory discussed elsewhere in this dissertation, this representation of persuasion does not directly compete with other forms of discourse, and it does not feature meta-poetic devices demarcating between poetry and oratory. The *Urania* instead responds to earlier fantasies of poetic efficacy: Wroth's romance "sends up" negative depictions of oratory within its own genre. Insofar as Wroth contrasts one form of poetics with another, she contrasts the treatment of erotic subjugation in the romance tradition with her own archly satiric perspective on discourse and power.

In this depiction of persuasion, the efficacy of both poetics and rhetoric depends upon evaluating and taking advantage of contingent circumstances, in this instance, Urania's appraisal of Perissus' character (an ethos almost explicitly linked to romance) and her ability to respond effectively to his situation using the resources at her disposal. To an extent, all rhetoric deals with contingency. The wager staked by Crassus in *De Oratore* is that, while precise knowledge of oratory remains impossible because of constantly changing conditions, theorists can still abstract precepts about the art.²⁷⁸

Antonius, disdaining theory, disagrees, defining an orator as anyone who persuades a listener; to accomplish this, an orator merely needs “to accommodate in order to speak persuasively,” *accommodate ad persuadendum possit dicere*; to cultivate skill in this practice, a speaker should immerse himself in the common practice of the state’s life, *in usu civitatum vulgari ac forensi*.²⁷⁹ Urania’s impersonation of Perissus’ ideal self is an act of accommodation predicated upon a hermeneutics of the everyday. She correctly reads Perissus’ character and situation and then cogently responds to the state of affairs surrounding her. Spoken by the romance’s titular character, this representation of ordinary eloquence demonstrates a response to a set of circumstances which render it decorous for female interlocutors to circulate their discourse within the *civitas*, the social body of the community. This opening salvo of the *Urania* conditionally opens a place for female discourse within the still-developing, still embryonic, public sphere. In this moment, Wroth constructs an argument for a poetics of liminality and civic engagement.

IV: Uranian Narratives

The persuasion in this episode both is and is not characteristic of the treatment of eloquence throughout the *Urania*. Throughout the course of her text, Wroth portrays rhetoric as efficacious more often than Sidney or Spenser, but the *Urania*’s many depictions of persuasion rarely if ever explicitly emblemize anything obviously or unambiguously related to romance. Several continuities, however, exist between this early depiction of persuasion and later episodes. While Wroth does not frequently emblemize poetic discourse through the representation of rhetorical exchange, her characters almost habitually use narratives and *exempla* to interrogate the ethicality and

efficaciousness of language and storytelling. The representations of rhetorical exchange throughout the text—almost consistently—explore how discourse works within different environments, interrogating both the decorum of stories which shadow real events and the propriety of counterfactual narratives. Just as Urania persuades Perissus by inhabiting the conventions of chivalric writing, characters throughout both halves of the romance use stories to navigate social situations, to influence others, and to achieve particular effects in the world.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the *Urania*'s strong focus on interpersonal relationships between men and women, characters often use stories to generate empathy and reciprocity in the subjects of their affections. For example, trapped in an escalating verbal combat over the favors of Amphilanthus, Pamphilia and Antissia exchange stories in an attempt to frame their experiences with love and desire. Antissia, in particular, tries to fashion a narrative which will maneuver the King into sympathizing with her own misunderstandings of their previous interactions. Never a strong interpreter of events, language, or people, Antissia mistakenly believes Amphilanthus previously wooed her affection only to later betray her by denying his earlier claims of adoration. Thinking herself deceived by Amphilanthus' protestations of love, she reproved the King, an episode which led to his establishing a distance between himself and her person. While walking and speaking with her peers, the hapless Antissia improvises a tale which attempts to reflect these imagined circumstances: she deploys her *exemplum* based upon both a misreading of events and her own character. Speaking before Pamphilia and Amphilanthus, the deluded woman tells a story featuring a protagonist she refers to as the "Brittany lady," a narrative of a potentially beneficial relationship run aground on the

rocks of misunderstanding and jealousy. Always a step behind her more self-aware rival, Pamphilia, Antissia deludes herself into believing she resides at the center of a romance far more conventional than the *Urania*. She imagines herself a protagonist in a narrative of betrayed love, something more akin to a plot point from *Amadis of Gaul* than *Don Quixote*. In the *Urania*'s version of reality, however, Antissia—at least at this juncture in the text—inhabits a satire on the delusions wrought by desire, not a serious portrayal of affection offered and then rescinded. Deluded by her own self-regard, she relates to Amphilanthus and Pamphilia how she met a lady from “Great Brittany” who, after originally spurning love and rejecting many suitors, was herself “conquered” by “respective love and neglective affection” (323.11-2). In this tale, the lady revealed her affection to the object of her desire and the two began an affair, a dalliance which quickly evolved into a relationship held together by force of poetic example. The lady’s love found “expression in verse...for he loved verse, and any thing that worthy was or good, or goodnes loved him so much as she dwelt in him, and as from ancient Oracles the people tooke direction, so governd he the rest by his example or precept” (323.22-5). The references to oracles and precepts directly calls to mind Sidney’s language in the *Defence*, a series of allusions ironically pointing to this moment’s focus on the value of fiction. Imaginatively enriched by their affair, the Brittany Lady’s love found examples in the verse she created and he in turn became an example for his countrymen. The relationship persisted until the lady grew jealous of her love and then rebuked him for a perceived slight, whereupon he broke off their affair, a terminus which caused the lady distress even to the point in time when she (supposedly) meets and relates her tale to Antissia—who, of course, in turn relates the story to her own audience.

Reaching this narrative juncture, Antissia slips; forgetting the device of the lady from Brittany, she brings the tale out of narrative time and into the present, the moment of exchange between herself and her auditors, exclaiming that “from that time, unfortunate I, lived but little happier then you see me now” (324.29-30). Severely embarrassed, Antissia attempts to pass off her slip into the first person as a performance. But Urania’s earlier essaying of the chivalric ideal works because she performs an *ethos*. Antissia, on the other hand, experiences an emotional outburst; far from using role-playing to seem like something not herself, her language clearly reveals an authentic affective response to her misinterpreted circumstances. Antissia’s response—“Pray God....I doe not play the Brittain Lady now”—only digs her further into a hole (324.32-3). Seeing her rival embarrassed in front of Amphilanthus, “Pamphilia smild to hear her come to that” (324.31). Pamphilia’s subtly triumphant response both points to the competitiveness of these exchanges and serves as an acknowledgment of her own skill as a poet and storyteller. Her ability to wield narratives and poetry provide her with a kind of status other characters, such as Antissia, struggle to obtain.

Antissia cannot, in the end, challenge her rival because she cannot control the fictions which facilitate social navigation within the *Urania*. Instead of influencing others, the stories Antissia tells overwhelm and control their teller. Seen in this light, her failure is as much narratological as incorrectly demonstrative. Because she localizes her story around her own person and subjective experience, Antissia eliminates any kind of external efficacy from her tale. The overeager Antissia presumably attempts to influence Amphilanthus, to make the object of her affection regard her more favorably, to influence him into emphasizing with her feelings. Yet the clumsiness of her approach makes her

attempt at persuasion too obvious to have its desired effects.²⁸⁰ Instead of portraying herself as a victim, she reveals herself as awkwardly manipulative. Instead of creating sympathy for her plight, Antissia comes to exemplify how desire can mislead foolish men and women into adopting inappropriate but self-flattering fictions which both fail to represent their author's situation to others and imprison their creator within an illusion, within a poorly constructed fiction. Her story becomes an example to her listeners, but not, unfortunately, the example intended by its inventor.

Critics frequently read this episode as contrasting Pamphilia's appropriately private, circumscribed expressions of poetic subjectivity with Antissia's inability to stop the verbal expression of her desire from becoming public.²⁸¹ But both Pamphilia and Antissia fashion their own experience into stories for the purposes of persuasion. More than that, Antissia directs the story of the unfortunate Brittany lady to a narrowly restricted collection of auditors: to Pamphilia, Amphilanthus, and any other unnamed interlocutors present as they converse among themselves as they walk. Antissia hardly broadcasts her story. Rather than violating the conventions of appropriate female discourse, her tale awkwardly reveals her motivations to her listeners. The idea of the danger Antissia falls prey to, exposing too much self-interest when inventing narrative proofs to influence audiences, arrived in poetics directly from rhetorical theory. According to several authoritative manuals, to be effective, *exempla* cannot be entirely personal; they must at least gesture toward universality. In practice, the contingency of rhetorical exchange prevents orators from reaching anything close to social comprehensiveness; in fact, theorists since Aristotle have advised directing paradigmatic stories towards specific audiences.²⁸² At the same time, examples cannot seem obviously

self-interested or self-aggrandizing. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, for example, cites the precepts of Greek rhetoricians who warn against using personal testimony during trials concerned with a speaker's self-interest, pointedly asking, *Non igitur ridiculus sit si quis in lite aut in iudicio domesticis testimoniis pugnet?* "Would a speaker not therefore be ridiculous if he justified his actions at a trial or domestic dispute by citing his own personal example as precedent?"²⁸³ Like the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*'s bad orator, the luckless Antissia invents a poorly chosen narrative which unintentionally reveals her as both guilelessly self-serving and almost miserably confounded by her own efforts.

Although nearly equal in rank to Pamphilia and theoretically able to achieve the same articulateness as her rival, Antissa fails to correctly evaluate and respond to circumstances. She proves herself a poor reader, and her flimsy shadowing of her personal situation compromises the efficacy of her narrative—a failure neither unique to Antissa nor to her gender throughout the *Urania*. In the course of Wroth's romance, both male and female lovers fail or prosper depending upon their ability to wield stories either to their advantage or to achieve affects they consider desirable. The emphasis on narrative control throughout the text, then, is not confined to episodes featuring female speakers making public interventions. To cite just a single instance of narrative wielded by a male speaker, while living as a hermit, Dettareus, Lord of Ragusa, comforts Parselius and convinces the younger man to abandon despair after he felt remorse for his betrayal of Urania. Dettareus tells his own life story—a tragedy which reveals Dettareus to be responsible for his love's demise—as a negative *exemplum* to encourage Parselius (175-180). This moment has several commonalities with the *Urania*'s opening tableau. Most obviously, like Urania persuading Perissus, Dettareus convinces Parselius to return

to the active life. But the two episodes additionally parallel one another by interweaving stories of betrayal and illicit desire with a concern with how men and women respond to adverse circumstance and personal failure. The representation of Urania's speech to Perissus establishes a role for female discourse in shaping events and responding to conditions and social situations, but a concern with narrative efficacy permeates the whole of Wroth's text. The *Urania* again and again returns to the subject of language's power to alter the world, to reflect experience, to express desire, and even to effect political change. Deeply invested in a gendered politics of discourse, the *Urania* nevertheless remains capable of exploring several different areas as context requires. Wroth's romance does not consistently locate its exploration of persuasion, narrative, and genre within either gender, but it also does not model female speech as confined or limited to the expression of the personal.

Conclusion

I want to conclude this chapter firstly by reemphasizing both the political character of the *Urania*'s representation of discourse and secondarily by suggesting what this politicization implies for the interconnected histories of romance, rhetoric, and poetics as traced throughout this dissertation. The two strands—interventions into Jacobean policy, on the one hand, and inversions of erotic romance, on the other—unsurprisingly, are not separate and sometimes not even distinct throughout Wroth's large and meandering text. Politics and individual history enfold one another throughout the *Urania* like vines creeping around the base of a marble column. The romance invests considerable energy in a fantasy of dynastic exchange—a portrayal of aristocratic marriage held together by a

conceptualization of desire characteristic of the romance tradition—figured throughout the narrative as creating social stability.²⁸⁴ Very probably, as both Victor Stretkowicz and Josephine Roberts suggest, Wroth adapts romance convention to represent an idealized portrait of Protestant Europe united through intermarriage under the leadership of the author's lover, William Herbert, a figure shadowed in the text by Amphilanthus.²⁸⁵ In line with this view of the *Urania*, Stretkowicz points out in his final, unfortunately unfinished, monograph that Wroth's romance is "a brilliant *tour de force* in ambiguous autobiography, panegyric and utter condemnation of political and familial tyrants of both sexes."²⁸⁶ Philargus, as I have suggested, is one such tyrant, and both his overthrow and Limena's rescue respond to the age-old analogy between father of country and patriarch of household, an ancient commonplace given new life by autocratic rulers throughout the seventeenth century, including by James I. The opening of the *Urania*, then, provides a fictional example—a model—for how certain women can productively counter abuses rooted in the symbolic power accrued through the correspondence between husband and ruler. More precisely, this episode links this analogy to tyranny, and it provides a fantasy of a female interlocuter successfully countering oppression intended to silence women. This opening display of female speech suggests that the *Urania* itself replies to a set of conditions which limited the circulation of women's speech and writing, a set of conditions which had both public and private—social and personal—dimensions (the same set of conditions also in play throughout the conflict between the two lovers and Philargus). By presenting readers with this fantasy, the *Urania* posits a role for female engagement in public life; it suggests how certain forms of discourse, uttered by specifically placed women, can fulfill humanist ideals of "eloquence" while at the same

time also challenging masculinist notions of rhetorical poetics in favor of a type of persuasion based in ordinary speech.

Significantly for the arc of this dissertation, Wroth portrays Urania accomplishing this feat by impersonating the ethos of chivalric and erotic romance. Yet, although this episode self-reflexively accumulates authority for the *Urania*, unlike the other moments discussed in my previous three chapters, this tableau does not transfer authority from rhetoric to romance or even to any particular conception of poetics or rhetorical poetics. Rather than accruing power for poetics, even a Uranian poetics, the impersonation of a fictional ethos justifies the circulation of female language; the text models an audience benefiting by attending to female persuasion, and it represents the result of this attending producing familial and social stability as emblemized through the successful union of Perissus and Limena. The text adapts the logic of exemplarity for the benefit of a female author; it manipulates the conventional justification offered by romance's—and poetry's—defenders—for a new context. If, as suggested in all defenses of poetry throughout the period, the audience of Renaissance romance learned by using the action and ethos of heroes and heroines as moral precepts, as *fabulae*, and as models, then the *Urania* suggests how a female author could embody these examples. The text models the representation of a rhetorical exchange—it demonstrates to readers, through Perissus' response to Urania, how the *Urania* should influence us as we follow its baroque and winding narrative.

This episode differs from the other texts discussed in this dissertation in several ways. By not participating in an agon with oratory, this moment reverses expectations and situates Wroth's text in a specific relationship to the romance narratives the author

draws upon and uses as raw materials from which to construct her *Urania*. The success of Urania's speech upends a long history of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century romance portraying oratory as ineffectual or unethical (or as both ineffectual and unethical). Wroth's romance, of course, has a vastly different scope, a different goal, from the earlier works discussed in previous chapters. As the most recent text discussed in this dissertation, and as the only work examined at length here composed by a woman, the *Urania* exists in relation to a different set of social conditions, and a revised set of political concerns, from earlier romances in the tradition of Sidney's *Arcadia*, a fact which holds true even as the text clearly and self-consciously positions itself as belonging and responding to this tradition. Stated slightly differently, Wroth uses this moment not just to carve a space for discourse spoken by women of her class but also to speak back to her precursors both in the romance genre and in Sidnean rhetorical poetics more specifically. Throughout the *Urania*, and particularly throughout this initial episode, Wroth challenges and then reconfigures the fantasy of a form of discourse capable of accommodating diverse audiences. As she does so, she creates a text almost devoid of conventional idealism which nevertheless remains a genuine inheritor of the romance tradition.

Wroth's imitation of her precursors, then, is both multilayered and tonally complex. While the influence of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* permeates Wroth's narrative, and while the *Urania* frequently satirizes elements of romance, nevertheless, the fantasies offered by the text at this early juncture—political, erotic, and familial—all depend upon the genre's investment in the positive portrayal of desire and its association with a feminine audience. The fact that Urania's persuasion heavily relies upon her imitation of

a heroic code of conduct closely associated with chivalric tales further demonstrates the importance of enacting as well as representing the *topoi* of romance for the *Urania*. As in several important moments from Sidney's *Arcadia* and Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, this episode of Wroth's narrative roots the self-reflexive conceits which justify its fiction firmly within generic convention. Yet despite these similarities, the appropriation of rhetoric's cultural centrality for the promotion of poetics has fallen away from the picture painted in previous chapters. Rather than justifying fiction by portraying poetic conceits as accommodating female audiences at the expense of oratory, the first female author of a romance in English uses the conceits characteristic of the genre to justify her own discourse. Seen from this angle, the difference between Sidney and Wroth is the difference between the fantasy of an exchange between interlocutors of different statuses and an attempt to use romance to facilitate an actual exchange, the exchange between a female author and her readers.

This difference in Wroth's and Sidney's portrayal also highlights how the cultural status of secular fiction had fundamentally altered by the 1620s. Despite her vulnerability as a female author, Wroth could use romance as a channel for her voice because philhellene romance, in light of Sidney's example, had attained noticeable prestige within several important milieus both within England²⁸⁷ and on the continent: in humanist circles, in courtly settings, and even in the parlors of an emerging middle class.²⁸⁸ Sidney's precedent provided the genre with an aristocratic and genteel veneer (European authors' since before Ariosto's time had composed important works within the genre, but the popularity of the *Arcadia* certainly made humanist romance familiar to a vernacular audience in England). The tension between romance as a popular form and elite tastes

had simply slackened by the time Wroth composed her voluminous manuscript. Of course, moralists and religious writers continued to denounce the genre for its feminine and popular associations up until it was replaced with the novel, but to a significant extent, the genre had become respectable. This respectability, however, came with a cost: the affirmation of romance by elite audiences ensured that the genre could no longer comfortably function as a vehicle to demonstrate the popular accessibility of rhetorical poetics.

In one sense, the status of poetics, particularly the relation between poetry and oratory and between poetry and other forms of eloquence, remained profoundly contested in English literature throughout the seventeenth century. John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, for example, continued to juxtapose oratory with Milton's biblically inspired poetics. In *Paradise Regained*, Satan literally offers full knowledge of rhetorical theory, and the eloquence that follows this instruction—the very scope of humanist studies—as his final temptation of Christ during the Son's sojourn in the desert. Christ ultimately must reject oratory in order to serve as an example for *Paradise Regained's* readers. Milton's earlier epic, too, directly uses oratory as a touchstone for poetic exchange. Stanley Fish, to cite a well-known interpreter of Milton, has shown in a classic study that *Paradise Lost* portrays Satan as an evil orator who tempts not only the poem's characters, the fallen angels and Adam and Eve, but also provides the epic's own audience with the simulacrum of a temptation in order to test, correct, and strengthen readers' moral and hermeneutical concentration.²⁸⁹ Milton's poetics, at least in Fish's perspective, represent oratory in order to enact poetics—much as Sidney's and Spenser's great fictions had decades earlier. To this formulation I would add that Milton's example,

at least up to a point, demonstrates the continuities late seventeenth-century poetics had inherited from earlier poetic theory—and from the epic-romance tradition as embodied by Sidney, Spenser, and Mary Wroth.²⁹⁰

Viewed from a different perspective, Milton's case shows how deeply imbedded self-reflexive episodes had become within English poetry by the mid-seventeenth century; by Milton's time, negatively representing oratory to bolster fiction had long since escaped the orbit of romance. Somewhat paradoxically, the beginnings of this trajectory away from the genre are already visible in Wroth's *Urania*, at least when seen from the hindsight of later fiction and poetry.²⁹¹ In the conclusion to my first chapter, I suggested that Sidney's conception of poetic efficacy eventually metamorphized into the supposedly inviolable interiority of nineteenth century lyric. I now want to suggest that Sidney's and Wroth's poetics likewise participate in the emerging conception of the novel as a medium capable of expressing social "realism." Neither the *Arcadia* nor the *Urania* are novels, of course, but elements of both texts—particularly elements of the *Urania*—are novelistic. Although the concept of the prose novel did not yet exist, elements of these narrative works *feel* novelistic to post-Renaissance readers. Broadly applied to Sidnean romance, this is hardly a new suggestion. Long ago, Virginia Woolf commented that "In the *Arcadia*, as in some luminous globe, all the seeds of English fiction lie latent. We can trace infinite possibilities: it may take any one of many different directions." For Woolf, this myriad of possibilities "present," albeit in a latent form, within Sidney's text include "romance and realism, poetry and psychology."²⁹² I argue the same triad of latent possibility also exists in Wroth's *Urania*, although of course, the later work leans more strongly in the direction of some possibilities than others. In

particular, I think the *Urania* actually bends closer to novelistic realism than the *Arcadia*. Wroth uses the conventions of romance, but she deploys these conventions at a distance, often arguably an affectionate distance, and very often to satirize desire or male/female relationships. Urania's speech to Perissus, for instance, uses the commonplaces of romance as a persuasive strategy; this episode participates in the traditions of the genre, but it does so through a simulacrum of convention, not by straightforwardly committing to the *topoi* of romance.

The *Urania*, as a matter of course for a prose text written in the early seventeenth century, does not provide readers with a constructed "totality," in Georg Lukacs' sense of the term.²⁹³ In avoiding the representation of class and economic exchange nearly entirely, Wroth's baroque narrative cannot directly mirror her society in any complete sense. The *Urania* fails even to gesture toward a social whole. But the text does reveal, and even depict, a genuine site of cultural contention regarding the difference between the representation versus the actual expression of female discourse within the romance tradition and, by extension, within the spaces available for female authorship in the seventeenth century. Moreover, the text exemplifies a "categorical instability" which "negates romance idealism," a condition which literary historians such as Michael McKeon have linked to the emergence of the novel in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.²⁹⁴ Many scholars have accepted that by the 1680s, Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* could use the conventions of romance in ways that are recognizably novelistic.²⁹⁵ The example of the *Urania* shows that the transformation from prose romance to novel, although more clearly defined in later texts such as *Oroonoko*, occurred in a continuum between the two generic categories throughout the seventeenth

century, that the novel partially emerged from within the conventions of romance as much as it developed as a negative response to the earlier genre. The representation of Urania's persuasion of Perissus, moreover, reveals that this gradual transformation occurred, in part, in relation to a long tradition of rhetorical poetics justifying itself through a fantasy of fiction mediating between interlocutors of different social statuses, including speakers and listeners of varying genders. By rejecting idealism while preserving both the illusion of psychological realism and the representation of social conflict, the *Urania* takes Sidnean romance to the point where it approaches modern fiction. Fittingly for the course of this dissertation, Mary Wroth's complex representation of gender, speech, and romance links the development of the novel to older traditions of socially adaptive fiction.

EPILOGUE

THE ROMANCE OF SOCIAL STRUGGLE

*We're moving right along through the seventeenth century.
The later part is fine, much more modern
Than the earlier part...
It's good to be modern if you can stand it.*

—John Ashbery, “Commotion of the Birds”

My chapters have explored four tableaux of social struggle, violence, and persuasion, each of which invites questions about which form of discourse most efficaciously addresses audiences of differing social statuses. As my chapters have shown, authors as varied as Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare all used the conventions of romance to depict an agon between *poesis* and oratory. These authors portrayed formal oratory either as unethical or inefficacious while simultaneously depicting poetical or theatrical devices or conceits productively intervening between audiences and speakers of diverse social statuses. Of the authors discussed here, only Mary Wroth failed to use the conventions of romance to bolster the status of poetry at the expense of oratory; even Wroth, however, used a portrayal of persuasion to emblemize a fantasy of poetic efficacy. As this dissertation has shown, these exemplary episodes enacted a fantasy of fiction successfully mediating between different classes and genders, a fantasy which participated in the complex symbolic process of constructing a cultural demarcation between poetry and competing forms of eloquence. This trend contributed to the emergence of the poetical from the rhetorical, and, obviously, from the rhetorical-poetical, but this emergence itself was rooted within historical circumstances and material conditions.

The repeated depiction of accommodating *poesis* throughout self-reflexive romances suggests that modern ideas of secular “literariness” developed, not as hermetic and self-contained intellectual progressions, but as responses to a set of rapidly changing circumstances. This background partly explains the ambiguity and moral complexity of much early modern literature: the fantasy of accommodating texts inviting audience participation answered needs created by social discord throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but meeting this need required acknowledging and portraying the intractability of conflict.

At its most theoretical, this fantasy served as a justification for secular fiction, as well as a model for audience interaction with poetic or theatrical discourse. As praxis, accommodating *problemata* often functioned as a form of commodification, an appeal which sold prose, verse, and dramatic literature to customers who valued the chance to apply their discernment to fictional and dramatic works. Early modern romance—understood by contemporaries as existing within an accommodating tradition extending from narratives like Homer’s *Odyssey* and Heliodorus’ *Ethiopia* in antiquity to works like Ariosto’s *Orlando furioso* in the early modern period—paved the way for later understandings of literature and fiction as cultural categories. Because the generally unstated beliefs which constitute our own understanding of how literature works developed from and through past formations, even now, these texts call out, inviting readers and theatergoers to exercise judgement. Answering this invitation at once implicates us within and provides an anchor into our own modernity.

Notes

¹ Horace, *Satires, Epistles, and Ars Poetica*, trans. and ed. H.R. Fairclough (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 81-106.

² Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and its Humanist Reception* (Princeton University Press: New Haven, 1998).

³ Colleen Ruth Rosenfield. *Indecorous Thinking: Figures of Speech in Early Modern Poetics* (Fordham University Press, 2018).

⁴ My discussion of the *Homeric Problems* is indebted to Donald Russell, "The Rhetoric of the *Homeric Problems*," in *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition: Ancient Thought and Modern Revisions*, ed. G.R. Boys-Stones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 217-234.

⁵ See Jessica Wolfe, "Homer, Erasmus, and the Problem of Strife," in *Homer and the Question of Strife From Erasmus to Hobbes* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 59.

⁶ See Matthias Flacius Illyricus, *De Ratione cognoscendi sacras literas. Uber den Erkenntnisgrund der Heiligen Schrift*, trans. and ed. Lutz Geldsetzer (Dusseldorf: Stern-Verlag Janssen, 1968), 90.

⁷ Cited in Barbara Reynolds, introduction to *Orlando Furioso: Part One*, by Ludovico Ariosto, trans. and ed. Barbara Reynolds (London: Penguin Books, 1975), 78.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 78-82.

⁹ I borrow the vocabulary used by Flacius Illyricus, but even his sometime-rival Melancthon used these terms for the interpretation of scripture. See Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 79-89.

¹⁰ Don Paul Abbot, "Reading, Writing, and Rhetoric in the Renaissance," in *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Contemporary America: Third Edition*, ed. James J. Murphy (Routledge: New York, 2012), 158.

¹¹ Richard A. Lanham, "The Divisions of Rhetoric," in *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms: Second Edition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). 164.

¹² Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, trans. George A. Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), I, 1358a. Aristotle details the various ways to praise and blame a person, and even demonstrates the topics useful for this variety of persuasion, but compared to the other branches of oratory, epideictic receives very little attention.

¹³ Jeffery Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9.

¹⁴ The following is a summary of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, ed. by Harry Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954). I.5-25.

¹⁵ *On Rhetoric*, 1355a-1358a

¹⁶ Cicero gets around the problem in the *de Inventione* by distinguishing proofs from premises. See I. xxxviii.67.

¹⁷ For a broad overview of how the study of style provides an anchor into Renaissance literature, see the essays in *Renaissance Figures of Speech*, Ed. Sylvia Adamson, Gavin Alexander, and Katrin Ettenhuber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). However, most modern surveys of Renaissance rhetoric concentrate on this element. As early as 1970, Brian Vickers wrote a book in which he argued the importance of the figures in the expression of psychological states in the literature of the period; as late as 2012, Jenny Mann wrote a study arguing that the importation of the figures from classical languages into the vernacular contributed to the formation both of English identity and emerging conceptualizations of nationhood and empire. See Brian Vickers, *Classical*

Rhetoric in English Poetry (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970) and Jenny C. Mann. *Outlaw Rhetoric: Figuring Vernacular Eloquence in Shakespeare's England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).

¹⁸ For a survey on the topic and a wonderful collection of primary sources, see William E. Engel, Rory Loughnane, and Grant William, *The Memory Arts in Renaissance England: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

¹⁹ This system is still commonly used today by competitors in memory sports.

²⁰ Helmut Schanze, "Problems and Trends in German Rhetoric to 1500," in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, ed. James Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 108.

²¹ My claims here paraphrase Heinrich F. Platt, "The Place and Function of Style in Renaissance Poetics," in *Renaissance Eloquence: Studies in the Theory and Practice of Renaissance Rhetoric*, Ed. James Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 357.

²² See Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958) for a still useful summary of Ramist doctrine. Of course, Ong's thesis about the cognition of specialization has been heavily critiqued. Ong's claims about the broad influence of Ramus on rhetorical theory have also been strongly questioned. See, for instance, Brian Vickers, *Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1970), 40-44.

²³ Again, see Ong's *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue*.

²⁴ Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 60.

²⁵ E. Armstrong argues that Tudor poets and rhetoricians responded to Ramism as a challenge to poetry's cultural status. He sees *The Shepheardes Calender*, for instance, as confronting this imposition by representing Ramist critiques in the form of E.K.'s commentary, a critique which ultimately undermines itself in favor of a more expansive, ultimately Ciceronian, conception of rhetorical poetics. See E. Armstrong, *A Ciceronian Sunburn: A Tudor Dialogue on Humanist Rhetoric and Civic Poetics* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 94-115.

²⁶ This, of course, is a vastly simplified description of this process. For a study which challenges aspects of this narrative, see Anthony Grafton's *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991). As Grafton points out, the lines between Renaissance humanism and the New Science were more blurred than is now acknowledged. The account, originally promoted by figures such as Rene Descartes and Francis Bacon, which separated the literary nature of humanism from the scientific inquiry characteristic of institutions such as the Royal Society obscures the fact that the two forces were in constant dialogue with one another.

²⁷ See my first chapter for a more detailed account of the influence both of Plato and his early modern descendants.

²⁸ Although often attributed to Horace, the *ut pictura poesis* commonplace is actually much older. See, for example, Cicero, *De Inventione. De Optimo Genere Oratorum. Topica*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), 349. Tradition often ascribes the commonplace to Simonides of Ceos, but his description only survives in later paraphrases.

²⁹ Aristotle's *Rhetoric* did not widely disseminate in England throughout the period, but many authors knew of its existence: Sidney may have attempted to translate the text while a student (again, see Chapter One). Scaliger repeatedly attacked Erasmus during the Ciceronian debates, but the role of both scholars within this controversy highlights the centrality of rhetoric to humanist programs.

³⁰ See, for example, Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

³¹ See Robert Stillman, *Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008) and Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³² Jean Grondin, *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Trans. Joel Weinsheimer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 2. Grondin does acknowledge the existence of the *hermeneutica sacra*, the *hermeneutica profana*, and the *hermeneutica juris* in the Renaissance, but does not substantially engage with these traditions.

³³ See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*, Ed. and Trans. Sander L. Gilman, et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). This volume is an edition of the philosopher's "Lecture Notes on Rhetoric."

³⁴ See Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 90-100.

³⁵ See Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1996), 80-2.

³⁶ See Jessica Wolfe, "Homer, Erasmus, and the Problem of Strife," 57-111.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁸ Rosemond Tuve, "The Criterion of Rhetorical Efficacy" and "The Criterion of Decorum," in *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), 180-191 and 192-247. Of course, looking at Tuve's claims about seventeenth-century poetry from a distance, many of her arguments about the supposed universality of decorous poetry are overstated.

³⁹ Theodor Adorno, "79: *Intellectus sacrificium intellectus*," in *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life*, Trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London: Verso Books, 2005), 122.

⁴⁰ In a still influential reading, Stephen Greenblatt directly questions, "Why should Sidney, sensitive, generous, and idealistic, choose to depict the heroes of his romance in this grotesque and lurid light?" See "Murdering Peasants: Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion," in *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York: Routledge Press, 1990), 154.

⁴¹ For discussions on Sidney's attitude toward popular resistance see Rosemary Kegl, "'Altogether like a falling steeple'. The Politics of Sidney's Rebellions," in *The Rhetoric of Concealment: Figuring Gender and Class in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 43-75; Richard McCoy, *Sir Philip Sidney: Rebellion in Arcadia* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University press, 1979); Irving Ribner, "Sir Philip Sidney on Civil Insurrection," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 13.2 (1952), 257-65; Tracy Sedinger, "Sidney's *New Arcadia* and the Decay of Protestant Republicanism," *SEL* 47.1 (2007), 57-77; Susanne Woods, "Freedom and Tyranny in Sydney's *Arcadia*," in *Sir Phillip Sidney's Achievement*, ed. by Arthur F. Kinney, et al (New York: AMS Press,

1990), 165-76; and Blair Worden, *The Sound of Virtue: Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia" and Elizabethan Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

⁴² When questioned about the causes of the revolt by Pyrocles, the peasants, unable to achieve a consensus, all provide different justifications for their actions. Obviously, this fits into the early modern stereotype of the "many-headed multitude," but it also underscores the importance of Clinias' oratory in fomenting the rebellion.

⁴³ Greenblatt interprets the princes' disguises as devices permitting Sidney to mock the impoverished artisans, assuaging anxiety over the possibility of lower-class revolt without compromising the ethos of the *Arcadia's* protagonists. This reading, however, entirely brackets off the hypocrisy of the oratory that frames the uprising, taking for granted that Sidney speaks through Pyrocles: "Murdering Peasants," 132-75.

⁴⁴ Arthur F. Kinney has shown the centrality of the humanist-rhetorical tradition to Sidney's project in the *Arcadia* and the author's interest in rhetoric's failures and limitations. See *Humanist Poetics: Thought Rhetoric and Fiction in Sixteenth Century England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), 233.

⁴⁵ See Gavin Alexander's introduction to William Scott, *The Model of Poesy*, ed. Gavin Alexander (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), xxxviii-li for a more accurate assessment of the relationship between rhetoric and poetics in the period. For rhetorical poetics in the Italian Renaissance, see Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*. Vols. I and II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961). In particular, Weinberg's discussion of Julius Caesar Scaliger's poetics (743-50) helps contextualize Sidney on the relationship between poetry and its sister/rival form of discourse.

⁴⁶ Don Paul Abbot, "Reading, Writing, and Rhetoric in the Renaissance," 157.

⁴⁷ See Page DuBois, *History, Rhetorical Description, and the Epic: From Homer to Spenser* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1982), 3. Elizabeth Bearden, *The Emblematic of the Self: Ekphrasis and Identity in Renaissance Imitations of Greek Romance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 13 on the other hand, argues that Greek romance uses *ekphrasis* to handle marginalized figures; as such, *ekphrasis* ironically has potential as a form of communication for the lower-class painter.

⁴⁸ Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Victor Skretkowicz (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 281. Further quotations cited parenthetically in the text. Although both versions of the *Arcadia* contain the peasants' revolt, I cite those from *New Arcadia* because of its greater engagement with politics and larger scope.

⁴⁹ For an examination of how Sidney's theory of *enargia* evolves from Melanchthon's innate *notitiae*, see Robert Stillman, *Philip Sidney and the Poetics of Renaissance Cosmopolitanism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008). Stillman's monograph also contains the best glossing of Sidney's use of the rhetorical term *scope*.

⁵⁰ See Judith Dundas, *Pencils Rhétorique: Renaissance Poets and the Art of Painting* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993), 15-53 for a discussion of Sidney's relationship to visual art. All citations from the *Defence* are from Sir Philip Sidney, "The Defence of Poesy," in *The Major Works*, ed. Katherine Duncan Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 212-50.

⁵¹ DuBois, *History, Rhetorical Description, and the Epic*, 3.

⁵² As in Shakespeare's "plagiarism" of Plutarch in his description of Cleopatra's barge, Renaissance-era readers would have considered this an example of the wildly practiced

and accepted technique of *imitatio*. Dundas, *Pencils Rhetorique*, 116 points out that the artist is punished because of his literal-mindedness, for not understanding "that his art is essentially an art of fiction."

⁵³ Statius, 8.551-2. The translation is my own, but I use the text from *Thebaid* Vol. II, ed. D.R. Shackleton Bailey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁵⁴ Sidney carefully avoids directly claiming that theology is subordinate to poetics, but he also insinuates that poets mediate access to the godhead in ways impossible for divines. *Sola Scriptura*, after all, takes on a different meaning if you consider the Bible as poetry.

⁵⁵ Stillman, *Philip Sidney*, 119. Sidney syncretically uses "Ideas" to refer to Platonic forms and *notitiae* simultaneously.

⁵⁶ "Learned discretion" and "divine consideration" obviously allude to poetical and rhetorical decorum, a term defined as the fitness of a style to a topic but which also includes the appropriateness of subject matter and argument to a particular audience or exigency. Interpretive accommodation originally developed as a form of meta-analysis useful for teaching orators how to respond to particular rhetorical contexts prior to being adopted first by theology and then by hermeneutics before finally becoming the backbone of Sidney's poetic theory. See Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and its Humanist Reception* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) for the definitive account of this transition.

⁵⁷ "Antidosis" in *Isocrates II: On the Peace. Areopagiticus. Against the Sophists. Antidosis. Panathenaicus* ed. George Norlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), 253-6.

⁵⁸ Moreover, in the tradition of rhetorical poetics, vivid imagery itself invites participation with narratives. Paraphrasing Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.65, Lorna Hutson points out that *enargeia* (*evidentia*) is inherently forensic: it "resembles the 'judicatory act of grasping together' that defines the intelligibility of narrative, and is particularly related to making what is fictive seem plainly true." *Enargeia*, then, both makes fiction persuasive through description while encouraging a form of accommodation that encourages readers to evaluate critically the scenarios they encounter through reading or in aural communication. See *The Invention of Suspicion*, 126.

⁵⁹ Abbot, "Reading, Writing, and Rhetoric in the Renaissance," 157.

⁶⁰ William Scott, *The Model of Poesy*, 6, 30.

⁶¹ See Wayne Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 1 for an overview of rhetoric's centrality to Renaissance education and the literary disciplines.

⁶² Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, Vol. 4, trans. Frank Justice Miller and G.P. Goold (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1916), xii, 11. 210-592.

⁶³ Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, Vol. 4, 210-592. Victor Skretkowicz's commentary shows that Sidney borrowed from Ovid: Victor Skretkowicz, ed., Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 555.

⁶⁴ Elizabethans figured Caeneus as a knight-errant, as a convention from romance. After his transformation into a man, Arthur Golding's translation states he "in feates of chevalrye from that tyme spent his lyfe": *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Translation* (1567), ed. John Frederick Nims (New York: Macmillan Company, 1965), xii: 235.

⁶⁵ Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London: British Library, Historical Print Editions, 2011), 96-7. This is a facsimile of the 1593 second edition. *The Garden of Eloquence* was first published in 1577, only a few years before Sidney is thought to have begun work on the *Arcadia*. While Sidney likely drew on Latin rhetorics, Peacham's explication of the figure highlights the ambiguities of *philophronesis* for Sidney's contemporaries.

⁶⁶ Peacham, *Garden of Eloquence*, 230. The italics are mine.

⁶⁷ Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 258.

⁶⁸ Philip Melanchthon, "The Praise of Eloquence," in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric*, ed. and trans. by Wayne A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 100.

⁶⁹ William Scott, *The Model of Poesy*, 32.

⁷⁰ Melanchthon, "The Praise of Eloquence," 100.

⁷¹ Melanchthon, "The Praise of Eloquence," 100.

⁷² Often attributed to Horace, this commonplace originates from a much older time. For example, Cicero refers to the commonplace: see Cicero, *De inventione. De optimo genere oratorum. Topica*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), 349. Aristotle's discussion of the three forms of proof as logos, ethos, and pathos in his *Rhetoric* (1356a.3-7) might be the original source of the division of eloquence's purposes into moving, teaching, and delighting, with *docere*, *delectare*, and *movere* roughly deriving from logos, ethos and pathos respectively. See Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 37-9.

⁷³ Plato, *The Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 275d. All my citations from Plato are taken from this edition.

⁷⁴ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 275d-e.

⁷⁵ Plato, *Sophist*, 234c.

⁷⁶ Scott, *Model of Poesy*, 6.

⁷⁷ Alan Stewart, *Philip Sidney: A Double Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 54.

⁷⁸ Arthur Kinney, *Humanist Poetics*, 236 points out, however, that "Sidney continues to insist on Pyrocles as a fallen hero in his manipulative speech to the Helot Rebels (2.26) and in his percipient speech to the rebels."

⁷⁹ See Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, Vol. I, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 72-74. Ricoeur is returning to Aristotle's conception of mimesis, but his proposal accords very well with Renaissance definitions of the term, including Sidney's, which construct poetry, i.e. fiction, as a form of making.

⁸⁰ Actually, Shklovsky cites Aristotle's dictum that "poetic language must appear strange and wonderful" as an example of defamiliarization in his famous essay. Although Aristotle's *Poetics* was not widely available in the early modern period, the Russian formalist is still drawing upon a set of concepts that would not have been entirely alien to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century readers. See Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Technique," in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, ed by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Malden: Blackwell Publishing. 1998), 19.

⁸¹ Defamiliarization and accommodation may seem to be etymologically opposed, with one making something unfamiliar, bringing something out of the family, and the other bringing something back into the home. Yet this is somewhat misleading:

defamiliarization largely refers to how the text affects the interpreter. Just because the metaphors are oppositional doesn't mean the concepts are actually in conflict.

⁸² My citations from Spenser's epic are taken from *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by A.C. Hamilton *et al* (New York: Routledge, 2013). Further quotations cited parenthetically in the text.

⁸³ Michael O'Connell, in "Giant with the Scales," in *Spenser Encyclopedia*, ed. By A.C. Hamilton (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 331-2 makes the connection between these conflicts and the Giant's political goals.

⁸⁴ Stephen Greenblatt, "Status, Genre, and the Representation of Rebellion," 164. According to Greenblatt's Foucauldian reading, the episteme—the historical conditions underlying the discourse in which this episode is situated—limits Spenser's depiction of the Giant's radicalism: ultimately, the Giant's threat is contained just as surely as it is represented.

⁸⁵ Michael Dixon, *The Politicke Courtier: Spenser's "The Faerie Queene" as a Rhetoric of Justice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 111.

⁸⁶ Dixon's interpretation has the advantage of explaining both the affect this episode generates in Spenser's reader and the similarity between the Giant and Knight, but it is not interested in the relationship between Artegall's rhetoric and the violence that follows. In fact, Dixon does not register an awareness of the Giant's execution at all, let alone attempt to relate it to the events that precede it. Greenblatt's reading, on the other hand, while conscious of how this episode is embedded within its social and historical contexts, forces Spenser's narrative into a predictable scheme of subversion and containment through a comparison with the rhetoric of Albrecht Dürer's *Monument to the Vanquished Peasants*, a resemblance which is very broad and based on an assumption that the unbuilt monument (a sketch of a memorial) and the poem generate the same affective response in their audiences.

⁸⁷ Carol Kaske sees the Giant as a kind of neo-Platonic "double" emblem wherein Artegall represents the idea or reality of justice whereas his opponent only represents a copy or the appearance of the concept—similar to how Duessa doubles Una or Archimago doubles the Hermit in Book One. However, this scheme fits better in the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* than in the books added in the second edition. While the Giant clearly is a double of the Knight, contra Kaske, he is substantially more dangerous than a figure like Archimago: the wizard threatens the journey and development of Book One's protagonist, the Red Cross Knight; the Giant, on the other hand, threatens to undermine the entire conceptual scheme underlying all of Book Five. See Carol Kaske, *Spenser and Biblical Poetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 35.

⁸⁸ I am taking Spenser's "Letter to Raleigh" at face value here in order to point out its inadequacies as an interpretive key to Spenser's poem: I do not actually consider the letter to be an authoritative guide to *The Faerie Queene*, particularly to the books added in the second edition. Like many Spenserians, I suspect that Spenser's purposes for writing his epic changed between the first edition of 1590 and the second edition of 1596. But this is a contested issue: see Jane Grogan, *Exemplary Spenser: Visual and Poetic Pedagogy in "The Faerie Queen"* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009) for an argument to the contrary. According to Grogan, the "Letter to Raleigh" functions as a satisfactory explicator for the poetics of *The Faerie Queene*—or at least the first five books of the

epic. She sees the poem's purpose as the fashioning of a gentleman, a fashioning which Spenser accomplishes through his use of images and narrative to shape his reader. Grogan is at pains to distinguish the differences between Spenserian and Sidneian poetics, even as she admits they have much in common. Rather than presenting virtuous protagonists to be emulated by readers, Spenser has "a Plutarchan appreciation for the discriminatory techniques to be learnt from the representation of vice," 16.

⁸⁹ Accommodation in interpretation is often figured as a kind of bringing home or making familiar. See Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 26-50.

⁹⁰ Both "decorum" and "accommodation" etymologically imply a homecoming, and the metaphor of a journey back home was never abandoned in theories of rhetorical hermeneutics until the eighteenth century.

⁹¹ For an argument that *The Faerie Queene* defers meaning in a manner which resembles poststructuralist thought, particularly Derridian deconstructionism, see Jonathan Goldberg, *Endlesse Worke: Spenser and the Structures of Discourse* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1981).

⁹² Ciaran Brady, "Spenser's Irish Crisis: Humanism and Experience in the 1590s," *Past and Present* 111 (1986), 18.

⁹³ Most forcibly Annabel Patterson; she views the episode as "destabilizing and problematizing the usually unexamined vocabulary we use to conceive justice—as weighing right against wrong, truth against falsehood. The reader finds herself, along with the Giant...struggling to make sense of an incoherent sign system, and therefore, experiences frustration rather than satisfaction when Artegall and Talus break the rules of the debate and solve the intellectual problem by using brute force." See Annabel Patterson, "The Egalitarian Giant: Representations of Justice in History and Literature," *Journal of British Studies* 31:2 (1992), 113.

⁹⁴ See Andrew Hadfield, "The Death of the Knight with the Scales and the Question of Justice in *The Faerie Queene*," *Essays in Criticism* 65.1 (2015), 13. Hadfield's essay is a corrective against the majority of readings which have "invariably assumed that the giant must be wrong and that Spenser is supporting his knight's reading of the situation because he is an apologist for absolute power," 16.

⁹⁵ Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser: A Life*, 220. Hadfield's biography does admit that the Giant's claim "that the universe should be based on more equitable principles has generally received short shrift from commentators," 373-75; more still, as the above footnote suggests, his 2015 essay, "The Death of the Knight with the Scales and the Question of Justice in *The Faerie Queene*," provides a more nuanced reading of this episode. Hadfield's earlier work, *Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), has shown how deeply the allegory of Book Five is immersed in the Tudor colonial project in Ireland.

⁹⁶ Artegall's role in *The Faerie Queene* fluctuates depending upon narrative context and rhetorical (and allegorical) purpose.

⁹⁷ In short, I find Patterson's description of how Artegall's conceptual and physical conflict with the Giant destabilizes the verbal signifiers of justice to be persuasive, but I also think this moment has significance for understanding how Spenser constructs the role of a poet within an ethically murky and complex national and religious conflict.

⁹⁸ Artegall's and the Giant's speeches rest somewhere on the border between deliberative and forensic oratory, with the location of the divide depending on if the debate's *stasis* is

concerned with whether the Giant should enact his program of reforms or whether the Knight and Titan are discussing if the cosmos has changed since creation. Since all of the arguments and proofs presented by both speakers pertain to the latter issue, I treat the debate as an example of forensic oratory.

⁹⁹ Literarily the debate is a declamatory contest, but this contest is more than an oratorical display. Because of Book Five's concern with justice, because the episode ends with an execution, and because the rhetoric used by Artegall and the Giant is forensic, the appropriate analogue is to a trial.

¹⁰⁰ Terry Eagleton famously calls for a renewed emphasis on rhetoric because of its traditional focus on "speaking and writing not merely as textual objects, to be aesthetically contemplated or endlessly deconstructed, but of forms of *activity* inseparable from the wider social relations between writers and readers, orators and audiences, and as a largely unintelligible outside the social purposes and conditions in which they were embedded." See *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 206.

¹⁰¹ This includes female readers: *The Faerie Queene*, after all, had an important reader in Queen Elizabeth whom the narrator frequently addresses, despite the "Letter to Raleigh's" assertions about fashioning a gentleman, and, unsurprisingly, many of the poem's earliest readers were women.

¹⁰² See Walter Oakshott, "Carew Raleigh's Copy of Spenser," *The Library* 26 (1971), 1-21. The 1617 folio was discovered in November 1966 when it went to auction at Christie's.

¹⁰³ See Jeffrey B. Morris, "To (Re)fashion a Gentleman: Raleigh's Disgrace in Spenser's Legend of Courtesy," *Modern Philology* 94:1 (1997), 38-58 for an examination of how Raleigh's life shadows Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*.

¹⁰⁴ A bemused Andrew Hadfield observes that this marginalia actually reveals that Elizabeth "knew little of her husband's interaction with Spenser beyond rumor and hearsay." See *Edmund Spenser: A Life*, 232.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 232.

¹⁰⁶ Oakshott, "Carew Raleigh's Copy of Spenser," 10.

¹⁰⁷ Andrew Zurcher, *Edmund Spenser's "The Faerie Queene": A Reader's Guide* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2011), 199.

¹⁰⁸ See Quintilian, 15.11.17-18.

¹⁰⁹ Oakshott, "Carew Raleigh's Copy of Spenser," 10.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹¹¹ I think a number of critics misrepresent this marginalia because they see it through the lens of the one clear mistake in the paratext. Yet even Elizabeth's admittedly bizarre claim to be Colin's mistress in *Colin Clouts come home againe* might not be what it first seems. She simply may have thought that Colin's interactions with the first of the maids had some kind of special relevance for her life or that the maid's description resembled her own in some way.

¹¹² Edmund Spenser, *A View of the State of Ireland: from the first printed edition* (1633), ed. Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 75-6. Irenaeus claims that "these Irish Bardes are for the most part of another minde, and so farre from instructing yong men in morall disipline, that they themselves doe more deserve to be sharpely disciplined; for they seldome use to choose unto themselves the

doings of good men for the arguments of their poems, but whomsoever they finde to be the most licentious of life, most bolde and lawlesse in his doings, most dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience and rebellious disposition, him they set up and glorifie in their rithmes, him they praise to the people, and to yong men make an example to follow.”

¹¹³ See John N. King, “‘The Faerie Leveller’: a 1648 Royalist Reading of *The Faerie Queene*,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 48:3 (1985), 297-308. King tentatively identifies the editor as Samuel Sheppard, a figure involved in a number of Royalist publications including the *Mercurius Elencticus*.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 307-08. King’s article helpfully reprints the editor’s preface and key.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 308.

¹¹⁶ The Egalitarian Giant actually has much more in common with the Diggers, sometimes referred to as the “True Levellers,” a group led by Gerrard Winstanley which advocated agrarian socialism and the abolition of private property. However, the Diggers occupied St. George’s Hill, Weybridge, and Surrey in 1649 (Winstanley likewise made his first publications in 1649), and *The Faerie Leveller* was printed in 1648. As such, *The Faerie Leveller* clearly alludes to those less-radical predecessors of contemporary liberal values, the political movement pejoratively named “the Levellers” by their opponents that took part in the Putney Debates of October and November of 1647.

¹¹⁷ Cited in King, “The Faerie Leveller,” 303.

¹¹⁸ John Milton, *Areopagitica*, in *The Complete Poetry and Essential Prose of John Milton*, ed. William Kerrigan et al (New York: Random House, 2007), 939.

¹¹⁹ According to Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, this legacy, “thematizes the interpretive act, at its best, as the arduous journey home,” 3-4. While she does not use the term, then, Eden still situates hermeneutics as a kind of interpretive *nostos*.

¹²⁰ See Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 3 for Erasmus’ endorsement of *interpres aequus*, the equitable interpreter who “accommodates the meaning of the words to the speaker’s meaning, the letter (*littera*) to the spirit (*spiritus*).”

¹²¹ See Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration*, 80-2.

¹²² Stillman, *Philip Sidney*, 114.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹²⁴ King, “The Faerie Leveller,” 307.

¹²⁵ Milton’s engagement with Spenser in *Eikonoklastes* has been understudied. John King refers to it in his article on *The Faerie Leveller*, 305, but most critics with an interest in Spenser’s reception history have simply overlooked Milton’s turns toward the earlier poet throughout his political writings. Yet, given the publication dates of *The Faerie Leveller* and *Eikonoklastes*, it is reasonable to suggest that Milton’s use of Book Five indirectly responds to the earlier pamphlet.

¹²⁶ John Milton, *Eikonoklastes*, in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, vol. 3, ed. Don M. Wolfe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 390.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 390.

¹²⁸ The Giant’s demise is not directly mentioned by Milton, but the context strongly implies that he is thinking of this episode.

¹²⁹ King, “The Faerie Leveller,” 303.

¹³⁰ As Hadfield notes, “after his death Spenser’s poetic legacy was a divided one. While for some readers he was a mainstream establishment figure, for many others he was a radically oppositional one.” Hadfield draws a distinction between the conservative, Royalist imitators of Ben Jonson’s classical style and the Spenser-influenced “‘shepherd poets,’ writers who valued a rustic style and provincial anti-court ways of thinking.” See “The Death of the Knight with the Scales and the Question of Justice in *The Faerie Queene*,” 18.

¹³¹ For Spenser’s influence on Keats and Shelley, see Greg Kucich, *Keats, Shelley, and Romantic Spenserianism* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2008).

¹³² Cited in Patterson, “The Egalitarian Giant,” 110-11. Patterson sources this to William Wordsworth, “Blest Statesman He,” in *Poems*, ed. John Hayden (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1977), 81.

¹³³ John Keats, *The Complete Poems*, ed. Jack Stillinger (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 408.

¹³⁴ Thomas Love Peacock, *Memoirs of Shelley with Shelley’s Letters to Peacock*, ed. H.F.B. Brett-Smith (London: Henry Frowde, 1909), 162.

¹³⁵ Allegory, according to Gordon Teskey, fundamentally “means something other than what it says and says something other than what it means.” See Gordon Teskey, *Allegory and Violence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 6.

¹³⁶ Stillman, *Philip Sidney*, 67-8. Stillman is writing about Sidney here, but he uses the opening of Book I of *The Faerie Queene*, the impossible picture of a Knight pricking on a plain being followed by the much slower damsel on her ass and the even slower dwarf following the ass, as an example of the demands allegory places on readers.

¹³⁷ Although as I concede later, the affect of this flouting of expectations tends toward irony and dark, even sarcastic, laughter.

¹³⁸ As I also alluded to in my introduction, the Giant is not necessarily portrayed sympathetically, and it does not follow that Spenser tacitly endorses his religio-cosmological program. Although as Shelley and Keats’ examples show (see section I of this essay), the text is durable enough to at least allow for that possibility.

¹³⁹ Again, see Kaske, *Spenser and Biblical Poetics*, 35.

¹⁴⁰ He attempts interpretive accommodation fail due to literal-mindedness.

¹⁴¹ The vocabulary in the passage, specifically the references to “extremities” and the assertion that “of the mean he greatly did misleeke” (V.ii.49.1-3), suggests that the narrator’s condemnation is situated in an Aristotelian ethical system. But the fact that the ideal mean has been violated is a detail agreed upon by both the Giant and narrator: the lack of a just ethical mean frames the conflict between Knight and Giant in this episode and is one of the essential conflicts of Book Five, more generally.

¹⁴² The affect achieved here is not unlike the “Cyclops” episode in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, in which the unwarranted hostility of a narrator actually accrues sympathy for the target of its hostility: the novel’s protagonist, Leopold Bloom. Spenser, however, was likely to see this narrative device as a form of *prosopopoeia*, impersonation or characterization, a technique that served as an important schoolroom exercise for students (*progymnasmata*) from before Quintilian’s time until the eighteenth century.

¹⁴³ My claims here are rooted in a famous disagreement between Paul Alpers and Harry Berger Jr. about the role of the narrator in Spenser’s epic. See Paul Alpers, “Narrative and Rhetoric in *The Faerie Queene*,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 2.1

(1962), 22-47, and Harry Berger Jr., "Narrative as Rhetoric in *The Faerie Queene*," *English Literary Renaissance* 21.1 (Winter 1991), 3-48. Arguing against the straightforward identification between Spenser and his poem's narrative, Berger proposes that *The Faerie Queene* frequently acts as a mimesis of a rhetorical transaction. Spenserian poetics, according to Berger, is not a zero-sum game, and the poet provides readers with a virtual or fictive transaction, "one that the poem actively represents and subtly criticizes, and therefore one that constitutes a rhetorical sense of reading from which readers can dissociate themselves," 12.

¹⁴⁴ See Berger, "Narrative as Rhetoric in *The Faerie Queene*," 12. Berger stakes out his positions based upon the difference between reading *The Faerie Queene*'s narrative as pure *storytelling* as opposed to a poem that *represents* storytelling. He supports this with a reading of the Phedon passage from Book II, illustrating that Spenser's indirect method undermines what the direct narrative of the poem actively promotes: it questions and even destabilizes the concept of temperance, drawing attention to the ways in which the gendered conceptions of the virtue are socially constructed.

¹⁴⁵ See Roger O'Iredale, "Giants and Tyrants in Book Five of *The Faerie Queene*," *The Review of English Studies* 17.68 (1966), 373-81.

¹⁴⁶ The narrator laments that "Me seemes the world is runne quite out of square / From the first point of his appointed sourse / And being once amisse growes daily wourse and wourse" (V.1.7-9). Both the Giant and the narrator derive their claims from classical tradition, but each speaker also confirms the legitimacy of this received authority by moving from tradition to their own subjective experience. In the context of *The Faerie Queene*, "Me seemes" is a troubling phrase. The prior four books of Spenser's epic establish "seeming" as a term associated with mistaken assumptions and dangerously malicious deceptions. The entrance to the den of Hypocrisy in Book One, for instance, initially "seems" "faire harbour" to Red Cross and Una. The tricksters Duessa and Archimago likewise repeatedly "seem" to be something they are not. The phrase's presence here emphasizes the unreliability of the narrator's justifications for Artegall's quest to restore justice to the world, just as the presence of the same commonplaces used by the Giant and the narrator similarly link the Knight and his opponent together.

¹⁴⁷ Judith H. Anderson, *Words that Matter: Linguistic Perception in Renaissance English* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 176. Anderson is adopting the term "frozen statements" from the work of Maurice Bloch.

¹⁴⁸ *A View of the State of Ireland*, 13.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 19-20. See also 29-30 for Common Law as socially constructed, "convenient...for the kingdome, for which it was first devised." English justice is appropriate for England because it was "first devised" to suit "the manners of your people, and abuses of your country, for which they were invented, they take their first beginning, or else they should bee most uniuert." See also, 79, for how the alterations throughout time can change a helpful custom into something capable of being abused. Spenser was practically forced to take a constructivist perspective on common law because of how greatly he detested its practice in the Irish courts which Irenaeus argues are unfairly stacked against the English. Undoubtedly, Irenaeus' arguments reflect

Spenser's own legal case over the estate of Kilcolman against Lord Maurice Roche of Fermoy.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 92.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 13, 82, 106, 85. On 82, the tenor of Spenser's metaphor may refer to the army and not the state, although the conceptual affect is largely the same.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 28.

¹⁵⁶ See James Holstun's "The Giant's Faction: Spenser, Heywood, and the Mid-Tudor Crisis," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37.2 (2007), 340, where he writes that "within a stanza, Artegall and Talus morph into an uncanny version of Pollente when they encounter a rout of 'fooles, women, and boys' listening to a giant attack custom, tyranny, and hierarchy."

¹⁵⁷ See Michael O'Connell, "Giant with the Scales," *Spenser Encyclopedia*, 331-2 for an example.

¹⁵⁸ Joseph Campana, *The Pain of Reformation: Spenser, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Masculinity* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 4.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 229.

¹⁶⁰ For a description of the common fantasy of an invariably successful rhetoric in humanist discourse, see Wayne Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric*. Also useful is Rebhorn's introduction in *Renaissance Debates on Rhetoric* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 1-14. Rebhorn points out that, for all the genuflection over rhetoric's supposed ability to control men and women's minds and to lead to social advancement, humanist education and rhetorical skill rarely actually achieved this kind of broad and total success.

¹⁶¹ Richard McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment: Elizabethan Ireland and the Poetics of Difference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 26. McCabe's study is magisterial and formidably learned: my caveats here are more a matter of emphasis than disagreement.

¹⁶² Again, see Michael O'Connell, "Giant with the Scales," in *Spenser Encyclopedia*, 331-2 for a summary of this "old historical" approach.

¹⁶³ *A View of the State of Ireland*, 79.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 79. The dependent clauses I have omitted in this sentence compare this ancient Irish institution with practices in Saxon England. As McCabe and Hadfield's studies, among others, have pointed out, one of the anxieties driving the representation of Irish "savagery" in *The Faerie Queene* and *A View* is a difficulty separating the Irish from the English, along with a belief that England before the Norman Conquest was quite similar to "lawless" sixteenth-century Ireland.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 81.

¹⁶⁶ Italics are mine.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 80.

¹⁶⁸ Patterson, "The Egalitarian Giant," 117.

¹⁶⁹ This definition is taken from *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "cess," accessed on February 3rd, 2015.

<http://www.oed.com.silk.library.umass.edu/view/Entry/30049?rskey=Wli83E&result=1>

¹⁷⁰ *A View of the State of Ireland*, 81-2.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 82-3.

¹⁷² Ibid., 83.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 140.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 140. Here too, Spenser draws a distinction between Irish and English social relations. Irenaeus asserts, “this is the reason that in England you have such few bad occasions, by reason that the noble men, however they should happen to be evill disposed, have no commaund at all over the communalty, though dwelling under them, because that every man standeth upon himselfe, and buildeth his fortunes upon his own faith and firme assurance.” There are two cavils worth remarking on in this passage. The first is that, while Spenser “others” the Irish, he does so based upon social practices, not essentialisms, as is more common in later colonial documents. The second detail worth noting is that Spenser differentiates the Irish from the English based upon how they depart from one another in maintaining the residual social formations characteristic of feudalism.

¹⁷⁵ See Jean Feerick, “Blemished Bloodlines and *The Faerie Queene*, Book 2,” in *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 32. Locating her claims in Book II’s depiction of genealogy, Feerick shows that Spenser contributes to a “clearing” of the till-then dominant ideology of rights granted by high birth and gentility, that is rights granted by “race” in the sense of lines of descent. According to Feerick, Spenser participates in a discourse portraying feudal relations and the Old English as oppressive while advocating for meritocracy and the New English settlers. However, in attacking lineal identity as the de facto basis of social power, Spenser and his compatriots eliminate one ideology of “race” only to inadvertently open the door for another.

¹⁷⁶ *A View of the State of Ireland*, 21.

¹⁷⁷ Hadfield, “Justice in *The Faerie Queene*,” 19-20.

¹⁷⁸ I am not arguing that Spenser’s poem should be privileged above his dialogue, or that the poem has a kind of autonomy that the dialogue lacks, or even that one text is more “meaningful” than another. I am only pointing out that *The Faerie Queene* attempts to generate a different response than *A View*.

¹⁷⁹ See Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motivation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).

¹⁸⁰ Thomas Heywood, for example, cites Donatus’ quotation of a lost remark by Cicero: “Cicero saith a comedy is the imitation of life, the glasse of custome, and the image of truth.” See Thomas Heywood, *An Apology for Actors* (London: Nicholas Okes 1612), 555-6, *Early English Books Online*, http://gateway.proquest.com.silk.library.umass.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99841838.

¹⁸¹ See John Webster, “An Excellent Actor,” in *The Complete Works of John Webster*, ed. F.L. Lucas (London: Chatto and Windus, 1927), 4:42.

¹⁸² This comparison between acting and moral reflection held enormous appeal throughout the ancient world. By the time of Augustus, the analogy had become so well established from stoic doctrine that the emperor could depart from life by asking the men and women surrounding his deathbed if he had played his part well, telling his followers and family to “applaud friends, the comedy is finished.” See Suetonius, “The Life of Augustus,” in *The Twelve Caesars*, ed. J.C. Rolfe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913), 99.1.

¹⁸³ John Erskine Hankins, for example, notes that G.L. Kittredge sources the commonplace back to Suetonius, Petronius, and John of Salisbury. Oddly, despite citing several antecedents (mostly noticed originally by Rudolph Helm) pointing out similarities to phrases from Cicero and Seneca, and despite directly referencing Montaigne's quotation of the commonplace from Cicero's *De Finibus*, Hankins does not look in Cicero's writings to see where the Roman orator *explicitly tells us* he derived the comparison from, and thus the connection to stoicism goes completely unnoticed. See John Erskine Hankins, "All the World's a Stage," in *Shakespeare's Derived Imagery* (New York: Octagon Books, 1977), 18-35.

¹⁸⁴ Cicero, *De Officiis* 1.46

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.93

¹⁸⁶ Cicero himself had directly compared ethical decorum to the decorum exhibited by poets who portray the action and speech of fictional personages as conforming to their individual characters. *Ibid.*, 1.97

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.94. Cicero writes, "*Quod enim viriliter animoque magno fit, id dignum viro et decorum videtur, quod contra, id ut turpe, sic indecorum.*"

¹⁸⁸ Jamey E. Graham, "Consciousness, Self-spectatorship, and Will to Power: Shakespeare's Stoic Conscious," *English Literary Renaissance* 44, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 249.

¹⁸⁹ Again, see the introduction to Wayne Rebhorn's, *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and the Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric*, 1-15.

¹⁹⁰ See Vin Nardizzi's "The Wooden Actor," in *Renaissance Posthumanism*, ed. by Joseph Campana and Scott Maisano (Forham University Press, 2016), 198.

¹⁹¹ For a still-useful discussion of the relationship between early modern theater and the emerging market, see Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

¹⁹² See Jean Howard, *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 10.

¹⁹³ See *Bartholomew Fair's* Induction, particularly the contract with the audience, for an example of Jonson managing audience response.

¹⁹⁴ This is a detail Alday's dedication to Sir William Chester acknowledges by referring to the book's translator and editor as "your daily Orator."

¹⁹⁵ I cite a copy of this work in the Huntington Library (STC / 281:04 on *EEBO*). See John Alday, *Theatrum Mundi* (London: H. D. for Thomas Hacket, 1566), 1. *Early English Books Online*,

http://gateway.proquest.com.silk.library.umass.edu/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:99838503

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁹⁹ My definition of "scope" relies on a glossing of the term in Robert Stillman, *Philip Sidney*, 63-65.

²⁰⁰ Alday, *Theatrum Mundi*, 2.

²⁰¹ All citations from Shakespeare's works taken from *The Oxford Shakespeare*: 2nd ed., ed. Gary Taylor, Stanley Wells, *et al* (Oxford: University Press, 2005).

²⁰² Quentin Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 64. *Forensic Shakespeare* is a formidably learned and often insightful book. I think Skinner underestimates Hermione's oratory because its ineffectiveness contradicts part of Skinner's claim about forensic rhetoric's role in Shakespeare's creative process. He ends his discussion of *The Winter's Tale* sounding disappointed, complaining that "By this time Shakespeare's dramatic purposes had changed, and he may even have lost his earlier interest in how best to defend oneself in a judicial cause in a 'winning' and persuasive style," 65.

²⁰³ Cicero, "On Invention" in *Cicero II*, Ed. and Trans. by H.M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), 1.27.

²⁰⁴ Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence*, (London: The British Library, Historical Print Editions, 2011), 96-97. This is a facsimile of the 1593 second edition.

²⁰⁵ This is not the same as the similar figure frequently translated into Latin as *circumitio* or *circuitio*, although both are etymologically linked, both are forms of amplification, and both are often translated as "circumstances."

²⁰⁶ Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence*, 164-167.

²⁰⁷ Italics mine. "Performed" in this case could refer to carrying out an action, but the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the first use of perform, as in "To act or play (a part or role in a play)" to 1598.

²⁰⁸ For Augustine and Paul, see Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 41-63. For Erasmus and Paul, see *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 77.

²⁰⁹ Nearly the opposite motion occurs in *Othello*.

²¹⁰ See Jane Hwang Degenhardt, "Dangerous Fellowship: Universal Faith and its Bodily Limits In *The Comedy of Errors* and *Othello*," in *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 32-73.

²¹¹ See "Heb. 11:1," in *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 Edition*, Ed. by Lloyd E. Berry (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

²¹² Geneva Bible (1560), Heb. 11:2.

²¹³ Again, see Hankins' "All the World's A Stage," 18-35.

²¹⁴ Montaigne, "Of Managing the Will," in *Essayes*, Trans. by John Florio (London: 2nd edition Printed by Melchisidec Bradwood for Edward Blount and William Barret, 1613), 7.

²¹⁵ See Lorna Hutson, *Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama*, 107.

²¹⁶ We do not know which humanists Prospero reads, but he is certainly not following the advice of figures such as Castiglione, Thomas Elyot, or Roger Ascham.

²¹⁷ The post-colonial critique of *The Tempest* was first inaugurated by Octave Mannoni in *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, trans. by Pamela Powesland (London: Methuen, 1956). The interpretation first received wide currency, however, due to Aime Cesaire's *Une Tempe. D'apres 'la Tempete de Shakespeare* (Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1969) in which Ariel is portrayed as a happy mulatto who takes pleasure in his subjugation.

²¹⁸ Stephen Orgel, "The Royal Spectacle," in *The Illusion of Power: Political Theatre in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 46.

²¹⁹ Leah Whittington, "Shakespeare's Vergil: Empathy and *The Tempest*," in *Shakespeare and Renaissance Ethics*, ed. by John Cox and Patrick Gray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 114.

²²⁰ See Harry Berger Jr., "Miraculous Harp: A Reading of Shakespeare's *Tempest*," *Shakespeare Studies*. 5 (1969), 253-83.

²²¹ A break which saw the emergence of liberalism, with its notions of autonomy, liberty, and equality before the law, concepts still hegemonic today.

²²² Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1670* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

²²³ See Victoria Kahn, *The Future of Illusion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015) for an argument that modern readings of works from the early modern period served as a point of contention for twentieth-century intellectuals. Faced with the failure of liberal secularism to offer a defense of its values when challenged by totalitarianism, authors such as Carl Schmitt, Ernst Kantorowicz, Leo Strauss, Hannah Arendt, and Sigmund Freud all critically engaged with the point in history they understood as a decisive break from older forms of political legitimation.

²²⁴ For a persuasive argument that the category of elite and popular literatures were constituted in relation to one another via the romance tradition, see Lori Humphrey Newcomb's *Reading Popular Romance in Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

²²⁵ See Arthur F. Kinney, *Shakespeare By Stages: An Historical Introduction* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 84.

²²⁶ See "The Winter's Tale at the Globe," in A.L. Rowse's *Sex and Society in Shakespeare's Age: Simon Forman the Astrologer* (New York: Charles Scribners and Sons, 1974), 306-7.

²²⁷ See the reference to the "great globe itself" at 4.1.153.

²²⁸ See E.K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930), 343.

²²⁹ Of course, conceptually, the contours between the private and public—and by extension between the domestic and the communal—blurred into one another more in the early modern period than in later epochs, especially when these contours concerned social classes still engaged in dynastic marriage. Aristocratic women, in particular, faced a unique and acutely severe set of challenges when navigating the demarcation between public and private roles. But the lack of clear boundaries between the widely social and the narrowly private only increased the value of a discourse capable of mediating between the two domains, making a form of language capable of influencing the broader political world through personal expression especially advantageous for women of Wroth's class.

²³⁰ As described in my introduction, Peter Ramus divorced rhetoric from dialectic, depriving rhetorical theory of three of its traditional five parts, leaving the study of eloquence with only the canons of style and delivery. As I will show, the success of Urania's persuasion relies primarily on the arguments she invents; as such, I think a Ramist influence throughout this episode is unlikely.

²³¹ See Margaret P. Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 72.

²³² See the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Ed. And Trans. by Harry Caplan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), I.iii.4.

²³³ Antonius, for example, makes the distinction between “easy speaking” and “eloquence” in the *De Oratore*. See Cicero, *De Oratore: Books I & II*, ed. and trans. by E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), I.xxi.94-96. Antonius is not as authoritative an interlocutor as Crassus, but Crassus also affirms the distinction.

²³⁴ See Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 7.

²³⁵ *Kairos*, as a concept, goes back to the sophists and Aristotle, but my definition here is adapted from Aaron Hess, “Critical-Rhetorical Ethnography: Rethinking the Place and Process of Rhetoric.” *Communication Studies*. 62:2 (2011), 38.

²³⁶ For example, Helen Hackett, “Yet Tell Me Some Such Fiction: Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania* and the ‘Femininity’ of Romance,” in *Women, Texts, and Histories 1575-1760*, ed. by Clare Bennet and Diane Purkiss (London: Routledge Press, 1992), 39-69. Hackett reads Pamphilia’s writing as enabled via cabinets and private spaces. Similarly, Bernadette Andrea reads the cabinet as emblematic of the contained female writer which subverts patriarchy only by supporting English imperialism: see “Pamphilia’s Cabinet: Gendered Authorship and Empire in Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania*,” *English Literary History* 68:2 (2001), 335-58.

²³⁷ Mary Wroth. *The first part of The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, ed. Josephine A. Roberts (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1995). Further quotations cited parenthetically in the text.

²³⁸ Helen Hackett, “The Torture of Limena,” in *Voicing Women: Gender and Sexuality in Early Modern Writing*, ed. by Kate Chedgzoy, et al (Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1996), 102.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 104.

²⁴⁰ Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time*, 219.

²⁴¹ Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Journal*, 21-2.

²⁴² Helen Cooper, *The English Romance in Time*, 219-20.

²⁴³ Although associated with women and the uneducated, the category of elite and popular literatures were arguably constituted in relation to one another via the romance tradition. See Lori Humphrey Newcomb’s *Reading Popular Romance in Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

²⁴⁴ Of course, complex representations of female knights and warriors, such as Britomart in *The Faerie Queene*, Bradamante in *Orlando Furioso*/ *Orlando Innamorato*, or Clorinda in *Jerusalem Delivered* was also an old generic convention. On balance, romance was probably more focused on women than other genres.

²⁴⁵ According to the *OED*, “liminal” does not enter English until the nineteenth century, but Wroth almost certainly adapts Limena’s name from the Latin term for “threshold,” *limin*. See

²⁴⁶ Mistress F.W. “On the *Continuation* of Sir Philip Sydney’s *ARCADIA*. By Mistress A.W.,” in Anna Weamys, *A Continuation of Sir Philip Sidney’s Arcadia*, ed. by Patrick Colburn Cullen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 114.

²⁴⁷ But what are these conditions? Both examples mentioned above respond to a lack, an absence, or an outright collapse of traditional authority—authorial incompleteness resulting from Sidney’s demise in one case and emotional enfeeblement in Perissus’ example in the other. Weamys’ and Urania’s discursive hermaphroditism become

patterns for social mediation: Weamys' completion of Sidney's efforts and Urania's deliberation to Perissus both respond to and correct different forms of masculine failure or limitation.

²⁴⁸ Hacket repeatedly refers to the *Urania* as a *roman a clef*. See "The Torture of Limena," 93. Mary Ellen Lamb also uses the term. See *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle*, 25.

²⁴⁹ Technically, all classical rhetoricians would define exemplification as a kind of proof.

²⁵⁰ Taken from Hannay, *Lady Mary Wroth*, 238.

²⁵¹ See "The Correspondence of Lady Wroth," in *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*, ed. by Josephine Roberts (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 236-241.

²⁵² Hannay, *Lady Mary Wroth*, 237.

²⁵³ Mary Ellen Lamb, *Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle*, 8.

²⁵⁴ M.T. Ciceronis *de Oratore*. 8^o. J Kyngstonus, 1573. L. HN.

²⁵⁵ See William R. Bowen, Germaine Warkentin, and Joseph Black, *The Library of the Sidneys of Penshurst Place* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 114.

²⁵⁶ For the centrality of *De Oratore* to theories of discourse, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Rhetoric in Medieval and Renaissance Culture," in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 3. John O. Ward likewise shows that Cicero's mature works such as *De Oratore* were neglected in the medieval period and early Renaissance in favor of the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* and *De invention*, but they increasingly became a focal point for humanist commentary throughout the sixteenth century. See "Commentators on Ciceronian Rhetoric," in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. by James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 126-45.

²⁵⁷ Arthur F. Kinney both points out how Cicero's *De Oratore* influenced the humanist classroom and served as a model for writers of fiction. See *Humanist Poetics*, 125-30.

²⁵⁸ E. Armstrong. *A Ciceronian Sunburn*, 5.

²⁵⁹ Armstrong's monograph, unfortunately, does not discuss Wroth.

²⁶⁰ Specifically, the overlapping and interdependent networks of identity—race, class, and gender—which create disparities, disadvantages, and marginalization for groups of men and women. This concept of intersectionality gained wide currency from Kimberlee Williams Crenshaws' work throughout the 1980s and 1990s. See, for example, Kimberlee Williams Crenshaws, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140 (1989), 139-67. Both the term and concept, however, go back many decades before Crenshaws' intervention.

²⁶¹ These concepts, of course, were unstable in the early modern period, and the emerging modern conception of race was particularly embryonic.

²⁶² See Hannay, *Lady Mary Wroth*, 230.

²⁶³ In the introduction to her edition of the *Urania*, Josephine Roberts points out that the King of Candia clearly shadows James. See iii.

²⁶⁴ For the much-combed over relationship between the *Arcadia* and resistance theory, see Endnote 37.

²⁶⁵ Sidney's depiction of Basilius invites comparison to the *Urania*'s many jealous husbands. While the father of Pamela and Philoclea is not overtly evil, he withdraws from the active life and sequesters his daughters away from society, both of which Sidney represents as forms of bad ruler-ship.

²⁶⁶ I refer to the conventions of pastoral romance, not to the conventions of the pastoral lyric. The two genres are obviously intrinsically related, but the commonplace of the lost royal scion living among rustics is deeply rooted in romance tradition.

²⁶⁷ I specify the *New Arcadia* intentionally. In *the Old Arcadia*, Strephon and Claius are nobles disguised as shepherds. In general, the unrevised version of Sidney's romance contains much less interest both in social mobility and in interrogating hierarchical stratification.

²⁶⁸ Fundamentally, a near explicit identification between heroic behavior and upper-class prerogative animates this moment of the *Urania*. Without a doubt, removing class from the other components of identity serves as the precondition for Urania's success in persuading Perissus. Urania can only convince the Sicilian once he ascertains her status as high born, upon realizing that she is not, as she first "seems," a mere shepherdess, a detail which highlights how strongly the scope of Wroth's romance relates to the elite preoccupation with the *vita activa*. Unlike Sidnean accommodation, Wroth's ordinary speech makes no pretense at mediating between speakers of different social statuses (beyond interlocutors of different genders). This moment of the *Urania* addresses a set of concerns about the relationship between gendered subjugation and the autonomy of desiring agents, but Perissus' ability to champion Limena's agency depends upon his adherence to the chivalric code, an ethos only available to aristocrats. Urania's *ethopoeia*, her impersonation and performance of heroic masculine behavior, succeeds due to the presence of an audience receptive to this form of role playing.

²⁶⁹ See Frances Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Routledge, 1972; New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1996), 1-15. Yates, of course, overstates the extent that the wedding between Fredrick and Elizabeth prompted a hermetic revival, but I suspect the chivalric motifs she identifies as centralizing around the royal wedding are at least tangentially and imaginatively related to the avocation of the active life in the early moments of the *Urania*.

²⁷⁰ Yates traces some of the response to James' unwillingness to support a more muscular advocacy of continental Protestantism. See Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment*, 15-30.

²⁷¹ See Josephine Roberts, introduction to *The first part of The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, xlii.

²⁷² These tensions would, several decades later, contribute to the English Civil War.

²⁷³ See, for example the discussion in Christopher Durston, "James I and his parliaments," in *James I* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 34-44.

²⁷⁴ See Mellissa Sanchez, introduction to *Erotic Subjects: The Sexuality of Politics in Early Modern English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3-10. Sanchez notes that Romance "constitutes an alternative tradition of political theory that stresses a perverse component of sovereignty, one that disrupts more conventional accounts of politics as driven by rational choice, false consciousness, or brute force," 4.

²⁷⁵ See Mellissa Sanchez, "Political Masochism in the *Urania*," in *Erotic Subjects*, 127.

²⁷⁶ "Virtue," of course, etymologically descends from the Latin *virtus*, manliness. The connection between masculinity and virtue adheres, at least distantly, to all uses of the term which depend upon classical definitions, including all contexts involving rhetorical theory.

²⁷⁷ Cicero, *De Oratore*, Book I.xxi.95.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Book I.xxxiii.108-110.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., Book I.lxi.260. The translation is mine. I gender orators as male following Antonius in the text.

²⁸⁰ In rhetorical theory after Aristotle and Isocrates, precepts warn that audiences should not be alerted to the fact that they are being persuaded. This advice generally pertains to the canon of *electio*, to discussions of style. Rhetoricians, including Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, and Quintilian, all maintain that orators should not inappropriately call attention to tropes and figures. The focus on alerting audiences to persuasive affects, however, suggests that this concern extends beyond the canon of style. Of course, Antissia's slip into the first person, among many other issues, is obviously also a blunder in *electio*.

²⁸¹ See, for example, Helen Hacket, "Yet Tell Me Some Such Fiction," 56.

²⁸² Aristotle is famous for the voluminous detail in his discussion of adapting to diverse audiences. See Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 2.12-17. The philosopher does consider certain proofs, such as those pertaining to happiness, to be universally applicable.

²⁸³ See *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, IV 2. The anonymous author (Pseudo-Cicero) ventriloquizes detractors who might object to citing his own writing to make points about style. While he argues for the appropriateness of citing his old works, he does not affirm citing one's own authority to justify past conduct when the appropriateness of one's own conduct is at issue.

²⁸⁴ For a discussion of how romance codifies desire as socially redemptive, see Helen Cooper, "Desirable Desire: 'I am wholly given over unto thee,'" in *The English Romance in Time*, 218-68.

²⁸⁵ Victor Stretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance: Philhellene Protestantism, Renaissance Translation and English Literary Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 271-335. See also, Roberts, introduction to *The first part of The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, xlii.

²⁸⁶ Stretkowicz, *European Erotic Romance*, 6.

²⁸⁷ It is tempting to ascribe this primarily to the influence of Sidney's *Arcadia*, but as Gavin Alexander points out, Sidney's influence did not lead to his brand of epic prose romance becoming the dominant literary form: "For much of the seventeenth century the *Arcadia* enjoyed a sort of unchallenged preeminence. The major literary figures wrote epic poems and plays, and not prose fiction." Nevertheless, in various mediums, romance remained a dominant genre throughout the seventeenth century, even if these texts did not always imitate Sidney. See *Writing After Sidney: The Literary Response to Sir Philip Sidney 1586-1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 262.

²⁸⁸ The fact that a young woman of comparatively low status such as Anna Weamys could write a completion of Sidney's *Arcadia* shows that the text was seen as available to an emerging middle class. See the information on Weamys' background found in Colburn's Introduction to his edition of her text, xvii-xxx.

²⁸⁹ See Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

²⁹⁰ I am unaware of any evidence that Milton read the *Urania*, but he clearly was influenced by Spenser (see Chapter Two) and was familiar enough with Sidney to recognize plagiarizations of the *Arcadia* in *Eikon Basilike*. See Barbara K. Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 248.

²⁹¹ Self-reflexive devices are also common in popular theater in the English Renaissance. Many, but no means all, of these devices are either in staged tragicomic-romance or are reactions to romance.

²⁹² Virginia Woolf, "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia," in *The Common Reader, Second Series* (London: Hogarth Press, 1935), 49-50.

²⁹³ See Georg Lukacs, "From the Historical Novel," in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, ed. by Michael McKeon (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000), 219-64.

²⁹⁴ See Michael McKeon, "Generic Transformation and Social Change: Rethinking the Rise of the Novel," in *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, ed. by Michael McKeon (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000), 382-399.

²⁹⁵ See, for example, William C. Spengemann, "The Earliest American Novel: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 38.4 (1984), 384-414, <https://www-jstor-org.silk.library.umass.edu/stable/3044746>. I could, of course, cite many more examples of readers treating *Oroonoko* as a novel despite its familiar romance elements.

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